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TAHITI

A SERIES OF PHOTOGRAPHS

TAKEN BY

COLONEL STUART-WORTLEY

WITH LETTERPRESS BY

LADY BRASSEY

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Of all that is most beauteous imaged there
In happier beauty; more pellucid streams,
In ampler ether, a diviner air,
And fields invested with purpureal gleams.

London
SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, SEARLE, & RIVINGTON
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PREFACE.

THE PHOTOGRAPHS contained in this book were taken by me in Tahiti two years ago. Taken at the time with no idea of future publication, they are now published owing to the great advantage they have been able to secure in having letterpress written to them by Lady Brassey. That lady knows *and* loves Tahiti so well that no one could approach her in writing an account of its beauties. For the photographs themselves I must make some apology, merely suggesting to those who are inclined to criticize them too closely that photographing in the intense heat of the South Seas is very fatiguing work, and development in a tent under a constant temperature of over 90° not conducive to the highest technical excellence as regards the results. The gelatine plates on which the photographs were taken I prepared in England, by a process devised by myself specially to resist the effects of the unusual heat. The result, chemically speaking, was satisfactory; but alas! how inadequate photography or

painting is to render adequately the exquisite beauty of Tahiti scenery! Much as I had before travelled—familiar as I am with the beauties of some of the loveliest spots in the world, Ceylon perhaps the loveliest for tropical scenery—the glorious beauty of Tahiti was a revelation to me. The central mountains of the island rising in fantastic shapes into the clear blue sky, the road round the shore of the island disclosing at every turn new loveliness of sea and shore, the foliage so delicate with beauty,[1] and the wealth of colour in the flowers, combine to make the drive round the island, from the first hour to the last, a dream of beauty. And then, beyond all else, the wonders of the coral reef! We were fortunate enough to get one day of dead calm off the shore of Eimeo.[2] We were crossing from Tahiti to the latter island, and as we slowly paddled over the coral reef, the absolute stillness of the water revealed to us all its treasures—the hundreds of tiny fish of all the most brilliant colours, looking as though a box of jewels had fallen into the sea, the lovely feathery tentacles of many-hued polyps waving to and fro, crabs of the quaintest forms dressed in the brightest livery, sea-anemones of

[1] Pre-eminently lovely among the foliage are the ferns, two of which, faithfully drawn, ornament the cover. The larger one festoons the trees, its fronds hanging down twenty to thirty feet in length.

[2] Called also Moorea.

wondrous beauty of shape and vivid colour, and shell-fish of every form and hue! The beauty of some of the latter cannot be imagined by those who are only acquainted with dead shells in museums, the glorious colour borne by the living animal fading all too quickly in death. To myself personally the study of the marine fauna of the South Seas was one of unalloyed pleasure, having for many years collected and kept in aquaria the choicest marine treasures of our own sea-coast.

The drive round the island took eleven days, stopping every night at one of the native villages on the shore, where a tiny native hut was always placed at our disposal. Eleven days seem a long time to take to go about ninety miles, but in such lovely scenery one *can* only dawdle, and the road, though so called, is at the back of the island no road at all; frequently we had to go breast-high through grass and creepers; and most of the little wooden bridges having broken up from decay, we had often to go out in the shallow sea, as the only method of circumventing the numerous rivers that crossed our path on their descent from the mountains.

We made the journey in a tiny open carriage drawn by two ponies, and driven and cared for by a Chinese coachman. I cannot speak too highly of Ah-Fa, the excellent Chinaman aforesaid. The care he took of

us, the still greater care he took of his ponies, and the persevering patience with which he removed or circumvented the many obstacles we found along our road—notably once, when he had to fetch all the men of a neighbouring village to carry ponies, carriage, baggage, and ourselves across an uncircumventable river—was beyond all praise. Moreover, he was strictly honest; and having in various wanderings had servants of almost every nationality—Arabs, Hindoos, Cingalese, Hottentots, Kaffirs, Negroes, Turks, Greeks, and many others—I am bound to say that Ah-Fa surpassed them all, with perhaps the one exception of a full-blooded negro who was with me once in the interior of South Africa. Both these men, singularly enough, were remarkable for their love of animals; Ah-Fa, besides the care of his ponies, having been greatly attached to our dog, who accompanied us. "Bruce,"[3] the latter's name, was quickly caught by Ah-Fa as "Boo," and many a pleasant talk they had together as the dog sat on the box by his new-found friend's side.

As to all the natives of the island, their gentle, lazy ways are very winning, and they were always willing to do all they could for us.

[3] Bruce is a dog of unusual intelligence, faithful and brave. During an attack by bushrangers on his former master's farm in the Australian bush, he was wounded, and his tail diminished in length. He was presented to me in Sydney, accompanied us to Tahiti, and thence to England.

But no account of *Tahiti* would be complete without mention of the missionary work that has now for so many years been carried on there by the London Missionary Society. Any one who has travelled much, and taken interest in the religious state of the various people among whom he has travelled, will know how dismally missionary enterprise has in many cases failed—not so much because the people were unwilling to listen, but because the fire of enthusiasm has been wanting in those who tried to gain their attention.

It seems to be little understood at home that the mere training of young men for missionary work is only adapted for turning out instructed machines; and the great necessity of missionary work, enthusiastic devotion, is, even if present at first, dulled and "trained" into something very different, and very ineffectual. How different has been the earnestness and fervour of the men who have preached the Gospel under the London Missionary Society in the South Seas, and the equally earnest men who have carried the Gospel for the Church Missionary Society throughout India and other heathen lands! How little "training" they required or received, and yet what results God has given into their hands! Let us look for a moment at the results of missionary work in the islands I am writing of. The population of Tahiti, and its neighbouring island Eimeo, is 10,000; and out

of these 2250 are communicants, or enrolled members of Christian churches. Over 1100 children attend Sunday-school; and the people have raised and spent very nearly 16,000*l.* in the two islands, within the last twelve years, in the building of churches. In the same period too, about 220*l.* annually has been spent by the people in the purchase of the Bible, printed in their own language; and all this has been done in the face of the fact that the dominant power on the island is Roman Catholic—a power that has, however, been unable to shake the simple faith of the islanders, owing, mainly, to the faithfulness and earnestness with which the teachings of the Bible, pure and simple, have been grounded in their minds. It is due, however, to the French authorities to say, that many invidious restrictions formerly imposed on the English missionaries are now removed, and that the management of the government school is now transferred from the Roman Catholic sisters, to a secular direction, the head and staff of which is exclusively Protestant.

A French Protestant Missionary Society also works in Tahiti; and the Rev. James L. Green, for many years the London Missionary Society's missionary in Tahiti, tells me that the most cordial relations exist between the two societies, their one common aim being to preach the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

While in Tahiti I took pains to talk personally with very many of the natives on religious matters, and found them singularly simple in their religious convictions; and after having held a service in a native church in the interior of the islands, I was surprised and pleased with the intelligent appreciation of the little I had been able to say, by those that I had the opportunity of speaking to afterwards.

One thing so unusual occurred to us that I must mention it here.

We had to cross one night from Eimeo to Tahiti, in a canoe paddled by four Tahitians. The weather was unsettled and the sea rough. When passing from island to island in the coral seas, it is always necessary to pass through a break in the reef of coral surrounding the islands. In this case we had to pass through an unusually narrow opening, through which the sea ran heavily, and broke on each side very rastily. As we rowed round the island inside the reef, we were of course in smooth water; and when we came opposite the break in the reef where we had to pass out, the rowers quietly stopped, drew in their paddles, and all knelt down in their boat, in prayer. The head man, who could talk a little English, then said, "Always pray God before go through," and it seemed with them to be a perfectly natural thing to do. We got out safe, and across to Tahiti, and just before landing

the same stoppage was made, and they again knelt in prayer, the head man this time explaining to me, "Now, thank God He bring us safe." This simple faith and reliance in God seems to be one of the main attributes of the religion of the Tahitians. In this, I think, we have something to learn from them. I need say no more, beyond that I only wish I could visit Tahiti again. The quiet restful life, the wondrous beauty of a land so different to the one which we northerners are called upon to inhabit; even the simple food, mainly consisting of pineapples, bananas, oranges, and other fruits, with an occasional pigling, roasted in the appetizing fashion of the South Seas, all make such a welcome change from our busy life! Alas! I see little chance of such happiness being in store for me!

H. STUART-WORTLEY.

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TAHITI.

To write, as I have been asked to write, a description of Tahiti, is to me alike a labour of love and of difficulty. However truthful, from my point of view, the description may be, it is almost certain to incur the criticism, not only of those who from actual experience are best qualified to express an opinion as to its worth, but of those whose impressions on the subject have been formed at home. The latter will feel convinced that exaggeration has been indulged in, while the former will protest that due justice has not been rendered to what they not unnaturally regard as an earthly paradise.

Tahiti is one of those places that must be seen to be appreciated. There is a subtle something in the air and in the climate that predisposes one to the intense though lazy enjoyment of existence. More than once I have observed the mere mention of Tahiti bring an expression to the faces of grey-headed men, who had visited the islands of the South Pacific in

their youth, which the remembrance of no other country could produce. The gratification of talking about lovely Tahiti with one who had been there recently was to them great and unfeigned; and I am therefore encouraged to hope that these pages may be the means of affording pleasure to others, by recalling the memories of the past.

Perhaps before attempting to describe the island as it presented itself to us, it may be well to begin with some information, derived from various sources, as to its inhabitants, its history, and its general features, which will at all events tend to show that I am not alone in my appreciation of this "gem of the Southern Ocean."

As an elementary piece of information it may perhaps be remarked that the word Tahiti should be pronounced as it is spelt, so as to rhyme with "mighty," and not according to the generally accepted English fashion, which is incorrect. This is what Captain Cook himself says, and the remark, of course, holds good to the present time.

Melville writes as follows:—

"Tahiti, or Otaheite, an island of the South Pacific, the principal in the Society Archipelago, is situated in lat. 17° 40′ S., long. 150° 30′ E., about 130 miles S.E. of Raiatea. It is an elongated high ridge of land, composing two peninsulas, each rising gradually from the sea-shore to an altitude of 7000 feet above the sea level, and covered to the summit with the most

luxuriant foliage. The one section is in length about 25 miles, and is nearly the same in breadth; the other is about 20 miles in length by 15 miles in breadth. From the great central peaks of the larger peninsula —Orohena, Aorai, and Pirohitea—the land radiates on all sides to the sea in sloping green ridges. Between these are broad and shadowy valleys, watered with fine streams, and thickly wooded. Unlike many of the other islands, there extends nearly all round Tahiti a belt of low alluvial soil, teeming with the richest vegetation. Here chiefly the natives dwell. Seen from the sea, the prospect is magnificent. It is one mass of shaded tints of green, from bush to mountain top; endlessly diversified with valleys, ridges, glens, and cascades. Over the ridges here and there, the loftier peaks fling their shadows far down the valleys. At the head of these the waterfalls flash out into the sunlight, as if pouring through vertical bowers of verdure. Such enchantment, too, breathes over the whole that it seems a fairy world, all fresh and blooming from the hands of the Creator. Upon a nearer approach the picture loses not its attractions. It is no exaggeration to say that, to a European of any sensibility, who for the first time wanders into these valleys away from the haunts of the natives, the ineffable repose and beauty of the landscape is such that every object strikes him like something seen in a dream; and for a time he almost refuses to believe that scenes like these should have a common-place

existence. No wonder that the French bestowed upon the island the appellation of the New Cythera: 'Often,' says De Bougainville, 'I thought I was walking in the Garden of Eden.'"

"The climate is fine, and the soil is a fertile blackish mould, producing spontaneously a great variety of edible fruits, roots, and vegetables. Of these the most common and most useful are the artocarpus, or bread-fruit" (of which there are above fifty varieties), "cocoa-nut, jambo, thirteen sorts of bananas, the arum, potato, yam, sugar-cane, and the paper-mulberry, of which the inhabitants make their cloth. The guava, though only introduced about thirty years ago, now composes the greater part of the woodlands and bush in the lower lands. Dogs, hogs, rats, are numerous. Saddle-horses are imported from South America, and the missionaries possess a few hundred head of cattle. The birds are of various kinds, and the natives rear the domestic poultry common in Europe. There are also wild ducks, turtle doves of a green colour, large pigeons, small paroquets, kingfishers, cuckoos, and herons. Of the small birds which abound in the forests, some are remarkable for the melody of their notes. The ants are troublesome, but no species of serpent has yet been found; and frogs, toads, and scorpions, if they exist at all, are rare. The sea on the coast abounds with fish, among which is the sea-snake, of which the bite is mortal."

"The natives are well-made. Their mode of life—

which affords them exercise, without subjecting them to severe labour—imparts to their bodies much of that strength and elegance which the human frame exhibits under good training. Some of the other inhabitants of the islands of the Pacific, and, among the rest, those of the Friendly Islands, may be more hardy and robust, and may display a greater appearance of muscular strength; but none of them seem so generally to unite that strength and elegance of shape which is often seen in the natives of Tahiti. Their colour is tawny, and of a shade much lighter than that of the inhabitants of the Friendly Islands; sometimes, particularly in the case of those of the higher ranks, it approaches to what we call fair, but the cheeks never display that glow by which the Northern Europeans are distinguished. The hair is generally black, but sometimes brown, red, or flaxen, and frizzled—but never woolly. The eyes are black, the nose flat, the mouth large, and the teeth white and even. The women are distinguished from the men by greater delicacy of form; and their skin is fine and soft, which condition is produced by their frequent bathing, and copious use of the oil of the cocoa. The chiefs—like the mandarins in China—used to be distinguished by their long nails. The practice of tattooing was nowhere more prevalent than in Tahiti, and the custom was common to both sexes. The dress of the Otaheitians is formed of a kind of cloth resembling paper, made of the paper-mulberry; but as the sub-

stance cannot long resist the rain, the garments formed of it are thrown aside during wet weather, and their place is supplied by others made of a kind of matting.

The missionaries introduced the culture of the cotton plant, and taught the natives to manufacture a coarse cotton cloth, and dress in a becoming manner. The climate of this country renders houses almost superfluous, and as the inhabitants require little shelter, they have been proportionally careless in the construction of their habitations. These generally consist only of a shed or roof, resembling the roof of a barn in Europe, supported by three rows of pillars, one in the centre and one on each side. They are thatched with palm-leaves; and the floor is strewed with hay and covered with mats. A few blocks of wood serve as stools by day, and by night as pillows. The food commonly consists of bread-fruit, bananas, plantains, yams, apples, and a sort of sour fruit, which is used as a relish to the roasted bread-fruit. The most general dish is popoi, which is made of the mountain plantain, beaten up to a paste or jelly with cocoanut-milk. Every kind of fish is eagerly devoured. The small canoes used by the fishermen are formed of a single tree, and each carries from two to six men. The larger canoes are formed of several planks sewn together, and are either fitted with an outrigger, or two of them are fixed together with planks. The seams are caulked with rushes, and the whole is covered with

No. 2. View of Point Venus—where Cook landed.

a gummy substance which serves the purpose of pitch."

Tahiti was first discovered by the Spaniards in 1605, and was called by them La Sagittaria. Captain Wallis, in the *Dolphin*, rediscovered it in 1767, took possession of it, hoisted the British flag, and called it King George's Island, ignorant or heedless of the claims of the Spaniards. In 1768, M. de Bougainville, in a French ship, took possession of it, and rechristened it La Nouvelle Cythère. In the following year Lieutenant James Cook was sent out in H.M.S. *Endeavour*, with a large staff of scientific men, to observe the transit of Venus. He anchored in Batavia Bay, and the spot whence his observations were taken is now marked by a lighthouse, on Point Venus, and a tamarind-tree, planted by himself. He also surveyed the island thoroughly. In 1772 the Spaniards came again, and tried to form a colony; but the death of their commander, Captain Bonnecho, in 1775, caused them to abandon the attempt. In 1777 Cook revisited the island, and found that all the deserted houses, graves, &c., of the Spaniards had been carefully preserved by the natives.

Eleven years now passed without any intercourse between Europe and Tahiti, at the end of which period Lieutenant Bligh, who had sailed with Cook, as master, came hither in command of the *Bounty*, which was commissioned by George III. to transport the bread-fruit-tree to the British West India Islands. She

arrived at Batavia on October 26, 1788, and remained five months, during which time the crew were said to have acquired a familiarity with the attractions of the island and the charms of its inhabitants, which was probably not without its influence in connexion with their subsequent well-known mutiny, though the unnecessary severity of the commander had much to do with it.

> Young hearts which languish'd for some sunny isle,
> Where summer years and summer women smile,—
> Men without country, who, too long estranged,
> Had found no native home, or found it changed,
> And, half uncivilized, preferr'd the cave
> Of some soft savage to the uncertain wave;
> The gushing fruits that nature gave untill'd,
> The wood without a path but where they will'd;
> The field o'er which promiscuous plenty pour'd
> Her horn; the equal land without a lord;
> The wish—which ages have not yet subdued
> In man—to have no master save his mood;
> * * * * * *
> The freedom which can call each grot a home;
> The general garden, where all steps may roam,
> Where Nature owns a nation as her child,
> Exulting in the enjoyment of the wild;
> Their shell, their fruit, the only wealth they know;
> Their unexploring navy, the canoe;
> Their sport, the dashing breakers and the chase;
> Their strangest sight, an European face:—
> Such was the country which these strangers yearn'd
> To see again; a sight they dearly earn'd.

The *Pandora* frigate, commanded by Captain Edwards, was sent in search of the *Bounty* and the

mutineers, in 1790. She arrived at Tahiti in March, 1791, and took away those of the crew who had remained in the island, fourteen in number, three of whom were afterwards executed at Spithead. Vancouver also visited Tahiti in the same year.

The foregoing voyages, made by order of George III., excited much attention in England, one result being the formation of a Missionary Society in London, whose first operation was to fit out a vessel —the *Duff*—which was to carry missionaries and the Bible into these newly-discovered lands. The *Duff* sailed from the Thames on August 10th, 1796, and after visiting the groups to the eastward, arrived at Tahiti on Sunday, March 5th, 1797. Perhaps the original success of these missions was the indirect cause of their subsequent failure, inasmuch as it led to the introduction of an exclusive system of treatment of the natives, and to the adoption of what, there is too much reason to suppose, were harsh and intolerant measures.

The success of the French mission in the Gambier Islands and other places induced the Roman Propagandists to send two priests, MM. L. J. Laval and F. Caret, to Tahiti, to establish their rule of faith. This step was fiercely opposed by those at the head of the existing order of theological opinions, and the consequence was that these two persons, with a third—A. Vincent, a carpenter—were forcibly ejected from Tahiti. This act of aggression against French subjects

naturally attracted the attention of their Government, and the frigate *La Reine Blanche*, under Admiral Du Petit Thouars, arrived, and demanded 2000 piastres as the expense of the priests' voyage to France, and obliged Queen Pomare to sign a treaty, by which liberty was allowed to all French subjects. This was in 1843. The ice once broken, and the French power having already been established in the Marquesas, it was not difficult to find a pretext to lay stronger hold on this important island, in some points the key of the Pacific Ocean. After various controversies, therefore, backed by the presence of a powerful fleet, Captain Bruat, early in January, 1844, landed in strong force, hauled down Queen Pomare's standard, and hoisted the French flag, taking possession of the island in the name of Louis Philippe, King of the French. Since that time it has nominally been under French protection, which, however, in the abstract, is but a name; for in reality the power wielded is absolute, and there will shortly be no evidence left of the years of labour, and the immense expense, bestowed in rendering this beautiful island and its people civilized in an English sense. But the protectors, with their military system, have proved to be but poor colonizers, and have neither developed the few resources of the island nor greatly changed the character of the natives.

After a voyage of five weeks, from Valparaiso to Tahiti, during which we had only seen two ships, and those, curiously enough, on the same day, but which

had been saved from monotony by constant and regular occupation, we arrived off the harbour of Papiete. I look back on that voyage now as one long dream of azure seas, and purple, gold, and crimson sunrises,—

> When the morning star fades in the light that she loves,
> On a bed of daffodil sky,

to usher in a cloudless day, with a brightness and lightness all its own, succeeded by a sunset of even greater splendour than the dawn. Such gorgeous masses and depths of colour I had never seen nor conceived. The evenings again were followed by nights in which mere existence was a luxury, made radiant by the effulgence of a moon by whose light it was quite easy to read, while the heavens were still further illumined by myriads of stars, through which flashed and darted meteors of a brilliancy hitherto unknown to us.

On the morning of December 2nd, 1876, the weather was unfortunately thick and rainy, and we were obliged to stand on and off, until at about half-past four a.m., we made the lighthouse on Cape Matavāi, where Captain Cook first anchored, and soon afterwards entered the beautiful harbour of Papiete, the chief town and only port of Tahiti.

The rain fell in torrents, and we lay-to outside the reef for a short time, until a French pilot came on board and took us in through the narrow entrance. It was curious, while we were tumbling about in the rough

sea outside, to see the natives placidly fishing in the tiniest of canoes on the lagoon beyond the reef, the waves beating all the time furiously on the outer surface of the coral breakwater, as if anxious to seize and engulf them.

At nine o'clock the rain ceased, and the mist lifted; the sun shone brightly, and we were able to see the enchanting features of the shore. Our impression as we first rowed towards it I cannot adequately describe. The sky above is of azure blue; a girdle of luxuriant and intensely green tropical vegetation, gorgeous with gaily-coloured leaves, and blossoms, and golden-hued fruit, encompasses this delightful harbour; while corals, sea-weeds, zoophytes, and fish of every possible tint and colour, are seen, as in a wild garden, beneath the transparent waters on which we are floating. Truly may we say,—

There, far below in the peaceful sea,
The purple mullet and gold fish rove;
There the waters murmur tranquilly
Through the bending twigs of the coral grove;

There with its waving blade of green,
The sea-flag streams through the silent water,
And the crimson leaf of the dulse is seen
To blush like a banner bathed in slaughter.

There with a light and easy motion
The fan-coral sweeps through the clear deep sea,
And the yellow and scarlet tufts of the ocean
Are bending like corn on the upland lea.

No. 3. A Street in Papeete.

And life, in rare and beautiful forms
Is sporting amid those bowers of stone,
And is safe when the wrathful spirit of storms
Has made the top of the wave his own.

The surface of the water exhibited every imaginable tint, from the palest aquamarine to the brightest emerald, from the pure light blue of the turquoise to the deep dark blue of the sapphire, and was dotted here and there with patches of red, brown, and green coral, rising from the mass below. On shore there was the rich growth of tropical vegetation, shaded by palms and cocoanuts, and enlivened by the presence of native women in red, blue, and green garments, and men in motley costumes, carrying fish, fowls, and bunches of cocoanuts, borne, like the grapes brought back from the land of Canaan by the spies, on poles.

The harbour of Papiete is large and commodious, the view from it most exquisite, past Quarantine Island to the beautiful Island of Eimeo. On landing one finds oneself in the midst of a fairy-like scene, bewildering in the brightness and variety of its colouring. The magnolias and yellow and scarlet hibiscus overshadowing the water; the velvety turf on to which one steps from the boat; the white road running between rows of wooden houses, whose little gardens are a mass of flowers; the men and women, clad in the gayest robes and decked with flowers; the piles of unfamiliar fruit, lying on the grass, waiting to be

transported to the coasting-vessels in the harbour; the wide-spreading background of hills, clad in verdure to their summits—these are a few of the objects which greet the vision of the new-comer.

The streets of the town are far more like avenues running through a gentleman's park, timbered with tropical trees, and bordered on either side by a low paling. They run back at right angles to the beach, and all rejoice in wonderfully grand names, such as Rue de Rivoli, Rue de Paris, &c. Under the shade of the trees are built huts and houses, of cane or bamboo, so small and so daintily put together that they look more like summer-houses than real dwelling-places. Close by is what is called the Chinamen's quarter, through which we walked, and which consists of a collection of regular Chinese-built bamboo houses, whose occupants all wore their national costume, pig-tail included.

The French Commandant lives in a charming residence, surrounded by gardens, full of what to us are the rarest and most exquisitely scented plants. Round the outer paling is a sort of creeping hedge of stephanotis and vanilla, the mixed perfume of which I can never forget. On the opposite side of the avenue is the palace of the late Queen Pomare, who was, during our visit, at Bola-Bola, taking care of her little grandchild, aged five, the queen of that island. She had gone down there in a French man-of-war, the *Limier*, about ten days before our arrival, to quell a rebellion;

and had been obliged to remain, owing to the continued disturbances among the natives. She was an interesting person, and did her best during her life to govern her country wisely and well.

Not far from this is the first bridge made in Tahiti. The island abounds in fresh-water streams, many of which we crossed in our subsequent journey, sometimes fording them, but more frequently passing over simple rustic bridges, composed of trunks of large trees, just thrown across from bank to bank, with roughly sawn planks laid on the top. The rains are of course of tropical violence, but it does not appear that the streams are often sufficiently flooded to make them impassable, or to do any serious damage, so that the same primitive style of bridge-building is still adhered to.

The English missionaries have done much good in some of the islands of the South Seas; but here they have not managed matters judiciously. They were too numerous, and of too many different sects; and the spectacle of their squabbles amongst themselves was not edifying to the natives they had come to teach. At last the latter lost patience with them, turned them all out of the island, and established a national church of their own, somewhat in the style of the Methodists, in which none but native ministers are allowed to preach, except by special invitation. In every village there is a French Protestant and a Roman Catholic church; but the people, who were formerly nearly all

Protestants, like their ancestors converted by the early missionaries, have now very generally embraced the religion of their masters, the French. In the opinion of those who have lived amongst them, they really hardly know the difference between the two religions; and it seems almost a pity not to leave them to practise one or the other, and devote the labour which would thus be spared to other islands, where efforts to improve the condition of the inhabitants are much needed.

The first missionaries taught the natives to wear a graceful dress, which is almost universal throughout semi-civilized Polynesia, consisting of a long bright-coloured gown, put into a yoke at the shoulders, and flowing thence loosely to the ground, which completely conceals the wearer's form, even to the tips of her toes. I think these dresses must come from England or America, for they are evidently machine-made, and the cotton-stuff of which they are composed has the most extraordinary patterns printed on it I ever saw. Cherry and white, dark blue and yellow or white stripes, red with yellow spots, and blue with yellow crosses, appear to be the favourite designs. The islanders were induced by the missionaries to give up infanticide and other more or less barbarous customs. But people here seem to think that the improvement effected is in reality more or less superficial, and that the moral feeling of the natives is much the same as it was in Captain Cook's time; the only difference being that

they now do secretly, in the darkness, what they then did openly, in the light. Surely, however, this is something to be grateful for. Even a doubtful Christian is better than an unmistakable savage; and it is not only in Polynesia that people are not what they seem. I believe it is perfectly true, for instance, that the old dances and songs, about which so much has been written, can still be got up at very short notice for the amusement of strangers. At Tahiti, as in more civilised communities, there always has been, and always will be, a certain class of people ready and willing to do anything for money.

In the evening of our first day at Papiete we went in our boats to see the coral reef, illuminated by the rays of the setting sun. Who can describe those wonderful gardens of the deep, on which we gazed through ten and twenty fathoms of crystal water? Who can enumerate, still less give a description of, the strange creatures we saw moving about and darting hither and thither, amid the masses of coral forming their submarine home? There were shells of rare shape, brighter than if they had been polished by the hand of the most skilful artist; crabs of all sizes, scuttling and sidling along; sea anemones, spreading their delicate feelers in search of prey; and many other kinds of zoophytes, crawling, wriggling, and dragging their length slowly over the surface of the reef; scarlet, blue, yellow, gold, violet, spotted, striped, and winged fish—short, long, pointed, and blunt, darting about like

birds among the coral trees and plants, which looked like exquisitely coloured palms, and ferns, and flowers. When we reached the outer reef the sea broke far above our heads, though inside we were safe and secure. There were one or two native fishermen, walking along the reef whipping the water, at the imminent risk of being washed away; but they appeared only to have caught a few small rock-fish, pretty enough to look at, but not good to eat.

All too soon it became twilight, and almost immediately afterwards dark. Then the bay was illuminated by the torches of the native fishermen, in canoes on the reef. Each canoe contained at least three men, one of whom propelled the boat; another stood up waving about a torch dipped in some resinous substance, which threw a strong light on the water; while the third stood in the bows, armed with a spear, made of a bundle of wires tied to a long pole, not at all unlike a gigantic egg-whip, with all its loops cut into points. This he aimed with great dexterity at the fish, who were either transfixed or jammed between the prongs. The fine figures of the natives, lighted up by the flickering torches, and standing out in bold relief against the dark blue starlit sky, would have served as models for the sculptors of ancient Greece.

Sunday morning here is a great day for the market, which commences before daylight at four a.m. The natives come in from the country and surrounding

villages, by sea and by land, in boats or on horseback, to sell their produce, and buy necessaries for the coming week. We walked through the shady streets to the two covered market-buildings, partitioned across with great bunches of oranges, plantains, and many-coloured vegetables, hung on strings. The salesmen and women had apparently passed the night amongst their wares, judging by the mats, beds, and pillows still lying about. The gaily-attired, good-looking, flower-decorated crowd, of some seven or eight hundred people, all chatting and laughing, and some staring at us—but not rudely—looked much more like a chorus of opera-singers, dressed for their part in some grand spectacle, than ordinary market-going peasants. Whichever way one turned the prospect was an animated and attractive one. Here, beneath the shade of large, smooth, light-green banana leaves, was a group of earnest bargainers for mysterious-looking fish, luscious fruit, and vegetables; there, sheltered by a drooping mango, whose rich clusters of purple and orange fruit hung in tempting proximity to lips and hands, another little crowd was similarly engaged; orange-trees were evidently favourite rendezvous; and in front of a hedge of scarlet hibiscus and double Cape jasmine, a row of flower-sellers had established themselves. Every vendor carried his stock-in-trade, however small the articles composing it might be, on a bamboo pole, across his shoulder, occasionally with ludicrous effect, as, for instance,

when the thick but light pole supported only a tiny fish, six inches long at one end, and two mangoes at the other. Everybody seemed to have brought to market just what he or she happened to have on hand, however small the quantity. The women would have one, two, or three new-laid eggs in a leaf basket, one crab or lobster, three or four prawns, or one little trout. Under these circumstances, marketing for so large a party as ours was a somewhat lengthy operation, and I was much amused in watching our *proveedor*, as he went about collecting things by ones and twos, until he had piled a little cart quite full, and had had it pushed off to the quay.

About six o'clock the purchasers began to disperse, and we were just preparing to depart likewise, when an old man, carrying half-a-dozen little fish, and followed by a small boy laden with vegetables and fruit, introduced himself to us as the brother-in-law of Queen Pomare IV., and chief of Papiete, and after a short talk, invited us to visit him at his house. We agreed, and following him, presently reached a break in the hedge and ditch that ran along the side of the road, beyond which was a track, bordered by pine-apples, and dracænas, leading to a superior sort of house, built in the native style, and surrounded, as usual, by bread-fruit, cocoanut, banana, mango, and guava-trees. We were conducted into the one large room, which contained two four-post bedsteads, and four mattresses laid on the floor, two or three trunks, and a table in

No. 6 Native and hut. Papawai.

the corner, on which were writing-materials and a few books. The chief himself spoke a very little English, his son an equally small amount of French. The conversation therefore languished, and after a decent interval we rose to depart. Our host asked if he might "come and see my ship," and procured pen, ink, and paper—not of the best quality—for me to write an order for him to do so, "in case lady not at home." He also presented me with some pictures of soldiers, drawn by his son—a boy of about eleven years old, of whom he seemed very proud, and expressed his regret that we could not prolong our stay, at the same time placing at our disposal the whole house and garden, including a fat sow and eleven little pigs.

A friend of his lent me a horse, and volunteered to show us something of the neighbourhood. Accordingly, leading the way carefully over all the rough places, he took us through groves and gardens to the grounds belonging to the royal family, in which were plantations of various kinds of trees, and a thick undergrowth of guava. The latter plant was first introduced by the missionaries, and it now overruns the whole island, and cannot be got rid of. In the portion of the town inhabited exclusively by natives, every hut is built under a large bread-fruit or mango-tree, amid cocoanut-trees, whose graceful stems and feathery crowns tower above a mass of orange and lemon-trees, plantains, bananas, guavas, yams, sweet-potatoes, and pine-apples. Where there is such

an abundance for all, and where the inhabitants have little else to do but to stretch out their hands and pluck the fruit, that almost falls into their mouths, it is neither surprising that the people are lazy, nor that they should not take the trouble to fence in and divide what I suppose they look upon as common property. The houses themselves are neatly built, some of small bamboos, fastened together, though not closely, with sinnet, made of cocoanut fibre. They are light and cool, and one can perfectly well see from the interior all that goes on outside, though the walls are impervious to the glance of passers-by, unless they put their eyes quite close to the crevices. Others are of bamboo leaves, loosely interlaced in a sort of diamond pattern, but are not nearly so tidy-looking or so durable as those just described.

Adjacent to the principal dwelling is generally a roughly-built cooking-hut, in which the work of preparing the morning meal—if we might judge by the savoury smells we encountered—was actively proceeding at the time of our visit. The mode adopted is to light a fire, and to make a number of suitable stones red hot. With these a hole in the ground is lined, in which are laid, one above the other, the various courses of fish, vegetables, pig, and fowl, each wrapped in plantain leaves. More hot stones, leaves, and earth, are then placed over all, and the food is left to cook for two or three hours.

The various members of the family meanwhile per-

No. 24. Our Washerwomen. Papeete.

form their ablutions, both of person and clothes, in the nearest stream of fresh water, completing their toilet in the verandah or under the trees, as the case may be. Many of them were so occupied as we passed, some of whom rushed into the stream to hide themselves, while others calmly continued the brushing out of their luxuriant tresses, anointing them afterwards with cocoanut oil, arranging them in long plaits, and decorating them with flowers.

The work of the laundress is here done in the most primitive fashion. The women go down to the streams, and, seated either on the stones or in the water, beat the clothes till they are sufficiently clean, diversifying their occupation with an occasional dip and a swim, either with or without their garments, which, though long and completely covering them, are simple and easily removed, or dry quickly in the hot sun if not taken off. Anything more graceful than a group of native girls, diving and swimming and gambolling in the water, cannot easily be imagined.

At ten o'clock there was service at the native church, close to the landing-place. The building is shaded by yellow alamanda and scarlet hibiscus-trees, whose scarlet and yellow blossoms dropped off and floated away on the surface of the glassy blue sea, among the white coral rocks, that peeped upwards like the lovely flowers of the tropical submarine forest. It was full to overflowing. The windows and doors were all wide open, and many members of the congregation

were seated on the steps, on the lawn, and on the grassy slope beyond. They were listening to a discourse in the native language, delivered by a young man with an intellectual and expressive face, who was formerly tutor to the Marquis of Lorne. Most of the people wore the native costume, which, especially when made of black stuff and surmounted by a little sailor's-hat, decorated with a bandana handkerchief or a wreath of flowers, was very becoming. Sailors'-hats are universally worn, and are generally made by the natives themselves from plantain or palm leaves, or from the inside fibre of the arrowroot. Some rather elderly men and women in the front rows were taking notes of the sermon. I found afterwards that they belonged to the Bible-class, and that their great pride was to meet after the service and repeat by heart nearly all they had heard. This seems to show at least a desire to profit by the minister's efforts, which, we must hope, were not altogether in vain.

After the usual service there were two churchings and two christenings. In the latter case the men held the babies throughout the ceremony, looking extremely sheepish all the time. One baby was grandly attired in a book-muslin dress, with flounces, a tail at least six feet long dragging on the ground, and a lace cap, with cherry-coloured bows; the other was nearly as smart, in a white-worked long frock and cap, trimmed with blue bows. The churchings and christenings over, there was a very long hymn, somewhat monotonous as to time and tune, but sung with

much fervour, followed by the administration of the sacrament, in which cocoanut milk took the place of wine, and bread-fruit was substituted for bread. The proper elements of bread and wine were originally used, but experience proved that, though the bread went round pretty well, the cup was almost invariably emptied by the first two or three communicants, sometimes with unfortunate results.

After church we drove out to Fuatahua. The road was bordered with pine-apples, which grow wild everywhere, but especially along the sides of the roads, where they spring up in luxuriant abundance from the crowns thrown away by the people after eating the fruit on their way to and from the market. They are the most delicious I ever tasted, and their cost is one halfpenny a dozen; consequently our sailors despised them, and thought them unfit for food. On reaching the open country we drove past trim little villas and sugar-cane plantations, until we turned off the main road, and entered an avenue of mangoes, whence a rough road, cut through a guava thicket, leads to the main gate of Fuatahua—a regular square Indian bungalow, with thatched roofs, verandahs covered with creepers, windows opening to the ground, and steps leading to the gardens on every side, ample accommodation for stables, kitchens, servants, &c., being provided in numerous outbuildings, where the servants sit about and chatter and gossip and smoke when not engaged in their work.

Thirty or forty years ago, when the owner of Fuata-

hua came out here, and established himself as a merchant, he did an immense deal of good by his enterprise, and was looked upon almost as a king by the islanders. He married a granddaughter of the late king and the Queen Pomare, who is the *chiefess* of the large district of Eimo. One of the sisters-in-law of the British Consul, an English lady, is married to the heir-apparent to the throne; another, who owns the Scilly Isles, not far from here, where the best pearls are found, is the wife of the American Consul; and a third is married to a gentleman at Valparaiso. All are "chiefesses," as they call them here,—not at all an empty title, when it indicates the possessors of several pearl islands, acres of land, and thousands of cocoanut-trees. Captain Cook says that the Tahitians, like the Israelites of old, choose their chiefs for being tall of stature and beautiful in person, good qualities which appear to be hereditary.

Soon after breakfast, we drove to the outskirts of a dense forest, through which a footpath leads to the waterfall and fort of Fuatahua. Here we found horses waiting for Mrs. Godefroi and myself, on which we rode, accompanied by the gentlemen on foot, through a thick growth of palms, orange-trees, guavas, and other tropical trees, some of which were overhung and almost choked by luxuriant creepers. Specially noticeable amongst the latter was a gorgeous purple passion-flower, with orange-coloured fruit as big as pumpkins, that covered everything with its vigorous growth.

The path was always narrow, and sometimes steep, and we had frequently almost to creep under the overhanging boughs, or to turn aside to avoid a more than usually dense mass of creepers. We crossed several small rivers, and at last reached a spot that commanded a view of the waterfall, on the other side of a deep ravine. Just below the fort that crowns the height, a river issues from a narrow cleft in the rock, and falls, at a single bound, from the edge of an almost perpendicular cliff, 600 feet high, into the valley beneath. First one sees the rush of blue water, gradually changing in its descent to a cloud of white spray, which, in its turn, is lost in a rainbow of mist. Imagine that, from beneath the shade of feathery palms and broad-leaved bananas, through a network of ferns and creepers, you are looking upon the Staubbach, in Switzerland, magnified in height, and with a background of leafy mountains, and you will have some faint idea of the graceful beauty of the fall of Fuatahua, as we beheld it this lovely day.

A little stream came tumbling from the height,
  And straggling into ocean as it might,
Its boundary crystal frolicking in the ray,
  And gush'd from cliff to craig with saltless spray.
Close on the wild wide ocean, yet as pure
  And fresh as innocence, and more secure,
Its silver torrent glitter'd o'er the deep
  As the shy chamois' eye o'erlooks the steep,
While far below the vast and sullen swell
  Of ocean's alpine azure rose and fell.

The fort itself is a place of considerable interest, where the natives held out to the very last against the French. On the opposite bank, the last islander who was killed during the struggle for independence was shot while trying to make his escape. Situated as the fort is in the centre of a group of mountains, with valleys branching off in all directions, it could hold communications with every part of the coast, and there can be but little doubt that the siege would have lasted much longer than it did, but for the treachery of one of the garrison, who led the invaders, under cover of the night, and by devious paths, to the top of a hill commanding the position. From this spot the French poured down their fire upon the people inside, who, unable to offer any effectual resistance, were thus compelled to surrender, after a vigorous but ineffectual struggle.

There are now no signs of the fierce warfare that once raged in this beautiful spot, and the ramparts and earthworks are overrun and almost hidden by roses. Originally planted by the new-comers, they have spread rapidly in all directions, till the hill-sides and summits are quite ablush with the fragant bloom.

One of the French *gardiens* brought us the key and admitted us through the gate. Inside all was quiet and peaceful, kitchen-gardens and strawberry-beds occupying the space where so many lives had been sacrificed; for it seems that the two old soldiers, left up here to look after the place, take advantage of

its high elevation and its sheltered position to cultivate European fruit and vegetables for Monsieur le Commandant, down below, in the town.

On our homeward journey the view across the harbour towards Quarantine Island, in the glowing light of the setting sun, with the opalescent tints on the surrounding water, was one of the most exquisite things I ever beheld. We lingered long on the shore, and some girls brought us mats to sit on, and laid oranges and cocoanuts and various fruits at our feet. We sat and looked and thought and dreamt, till the most distant glimmer of the dying sun was gone, the stars came out one by one, and the southern cross was high in the heavens pointing upward, ever upward,

> Dear is to me the hour when daylight dies,
> And sunbeams melt into the silent sea,
> For then sweet thoughts of other days arise,
> And memory breathes a vesper sigh to thee.

At daybreak the next morning, when I went on deck, it was a dead calm. The sea-breeze had not yet come in, and there was not a ripple on the surface of the harbour. Outside, two little white trading schooners lay becalmed; inside, the harbour tug was getting up steam to go to meet one of Messrs. Brander's vessels from Valparaiso, which we could just see in the offing. On shore, a few gaily-dressed natives were hurrying home with their early market produces, and others were stretched lazily on the grass at the water's edge or on the benches under the trees. Our stores for the

day, a picturesque-looking heap of fish, fruit, vegetables, and flowers, were on the steps, waiting to be brought off, and guarded in the meantime by natives in costumes of pink, blue, orange, and a delicate pale green they specially affect. The light mists rolled gradually away from the mountain tops, and there was every prospect of a fine day for our projected excursion.

I went ashore to fetch some of the fresh-gathered fruit, and soon we had a feast of luscious pine-apples, juicy mangoes, bananas, and oranges, with the dew still upon them. The mango is certainly the king of fruit. Its flavour is a combination of apricot and pine-apple, with the slightest possible suspicion of turpentine thrown in, to give a piquancy to the whole. It sounds like a strange mixture, but I can only say that the result is delicious. To enjoy mangoes thoroughly they ought not to be eaten in company, but leaning over the side of the ship, in the early morning, with sleeves tucked up to your elbows, using no knife and fork, but tearing off (or removing gracefully, would perhaps be a better expression) the skin with your teeth, and sucking the abundant juice.

A little before eight o'clock we started in a vehicle something like a char-à-bancs, with three seats, one behind the other, all facing the horses, and roomy and comfortable enough for two persons, though rather small, I should think, for three, the number that is generally crammed in. A Chinese coachman and a thin but active pair of little horses completed the turn-out.

The heat of the sun was almost overpowering as we emerged from the leafy groves of Papiete, but there was a nice breeze, and sometimes we were in the shade of cocoanut-trees. We reached Papea at about half-past nine, from which point onwards the scenery increased in loveliness, and the foliage was, if possible, more luxuriant than ever. In fact, it becomes impossible to describe its exquisite wealth of beauty. The gorgeousness of the flowers was so shaded and softened by the deep green leaves, that the whole was one graceful harmony by sight and of smell, a rhythm in colour, that compelled one to gaze till one could gaze no more, and at last obliged one, from sheer fatigue of beauty and satiety of colour, to close one's eyes and indulge in a vision of what seemed as if it could scarcely be reality. The flowers, the fruit, the colours worn by every one, the whole scene and its surroundings, seem almost too fairylike to have an actual existence. I am in despair when I attempt to describe all these things. I feel that I cannot do anything like justice to their merits, and yet I fear all the time that what I say may be looked upon as an exaggeration.

We passed by extensive coffee, sugar-cane, Indian-corn, orange, cocoanut, and cotton plantations, and vanilla, carefully trained on bamboos, growing in the thick shade. Near Atemavao we passed the house of Mr. S., the great cotton planter, and, shortly afterwards, the curious houses, or rather huts, of some islanders

he has imported from the Kingsmill group, to work his plantations. They are a wild savage-looking set, inferior to the Tahitians in appearance. Their dwellings are raised on high wooden platforms, approached by ladder-like steps, the lower part covered in with mats, the upper story composed of wooden pales, laid transversely, and the whole thickly covered with thatch.

I believe that in their own country they dwell in marshes near the sea shore, where such habitations are of course necessary, and that they have continued to follow the customs of their ancestors, notwithstanding the altered circumstances of the case.

The cotton mills, which formerly belonged to a company, are now all falling to ruin; and in many other parts of the island we passed cotton plantations uncleaned and neglected, and fast running to seed and waste. So long as the American war lasted, a slight profit could be made upon Tahitian cotton; now it is hopeless to attempt to cultivate it with any prospect of adequate return.

Near these mills the last battle was fought between the Christians and heathen. The exact spot, which was pointed out to us, is marked by a group of ironwood trees, *Casuarina equisetifolia*, two names derived from the hardness of the wood and the fancied resemblance of its fine heavy foliage to a horse's tail.

On our way we met an intelligent Norwegian carpenter, who gave us much interesting information about

No. 10. Camp of Jefferson Davis at Irwinville, Georgia, the night before the last battle between Confederate and Federal troops.

the island. When we told him that we had been in Norway, and said we knew something of Christiania, he was delighted, and asked us no end of questions about the country, which he has not visited for thirty years.

The sun was now at its height, and we longed to stop and bathe in one of the many fresh-water streams we crossed, and afterwards to eat our lunch by the wayside; but our Chinese coachman always pointed onwards, and said "Eatee much presently; horses eatee to." At last we arrived at a little house, shaded by cocoanut-trees, and built in an enclosure near the sea-shore, with "Restaurant" written up over the door. We drove in at the front gate, and were met by the proprietor, an old French soldier from Martinique, with what must have been rather an embarrassing multiplicity of women and children about his heels. The cloth was not laid, but the rooms were clean, and there was a heap of tempting-looking fish and fruit in a corner. We said we were starving, and after begging him to let us have luncheon as soon as possible, strolled down to the beach in the vain hope of finding a sheltered and comparatively shady spot in which to repose until it should be ready.

The beauty of the scene made up for what was deficient in other respects. Not every day can one behold such tempting pools among reefs of gracefully branched coral overhung by luxuriant tropical foliage, the blossoms of which drop into the water around and

float away, while lovely little blue, scarlet, green, and yellow fish dart about in the limpid depth beneath.

On our return to the "Restaurant," where we had been led to expect nothing in the shape of a meal, except fruit, vegetables, and fish, cooked in the native fashion, we found the table enticingly laid out, with little scarlet crayfish, embedded in cool green lettuce leaves, fruit of various kinds, good wine and fair bread, all arranged on a clean though coarse table-cloth. The only thing that was not tempting was a dish of salt beef and cabbage, which we thought was the *pièce de résistance*, and to which accordingly we tried to do justice. But it was not appetizing, this hot day. This was followed by a savoury omelette, so good that we asked for a second; when, to our astonishment, there appeared a plump roast fowl, with most artistic gravy and fried potatoes. Then came a *bifteck aux champignons*, and some excellent coffee to wind up with. On making our host our compliments, he said, "Je fais la cuisine moi-même, Madame." In the course of our repast we again tasted the bread-fruit, but did not much appreciate it, though it was this time cooked in the native fashion,—roasted underground by means of hot stones, in company with a little pig, plantains, bananas, and beans.

Afterwards I conducted a sort of conversation with the numerous women and children busily occupied near the house, and watched the operation in which they were engaged, of drying *bêche-de-mer*—a kind of sea

slug (*Holothuria*)—for exportation to China, where it is largely used. Some were also plaiting hats of palm-leaves and the interior fibre of the arrow-root. Those made of the latter material are very fine and expensive, costing from twelve to fifteen dollars a piece.

On resuming our journey we crossed innumerable streams, full not only of water, but also of bathers and washerwomen; for the Tahitians are very fond of water, and always bathe once or twice a day in the fresh streams, even after having been in the sea.

Near the two great central peaks of the island there is a fine lake, called Hitiaa, which at the time of our visit it was unfortunately impossible to reach, on account of the recent heavy rains and the consequent landslips. This caused us great regret, as the finest scenery in Tahiti is said to be in the neighbourhood of this lake, including that of the three valleys leading therefrom towards the sea-shore. Of one of the most beautiful of these, Papeuriri, the photograph will give some idea.

In many places along the road people were making hay from short grass, and in others they were weighing it preparatory to sending it into town. But the grass grown here is not at all nourishing for horses, and most people get their hay from Valparaiso.

The road that encircles the island is called the Broom Road. Convicts were employed in its original construction, and now it is the punishment for any one getting drunk in any part of the island to be set to

work to sweep, repair, and keep in order, a piece of the road in the neighbourhood of his dwelling. It is the one good road of Tahiti, encircling the larger of the two peninsulas close to the sea-shore, and surmounting the low mountain range in the centre of the isthmus.

From an elevated point we obtained our first view of the Tiarrapu, as the smaller peninsula of the island of Tahiti is called, and very beautiful it looked in the afternoon light. The neck of land known as the Isthmus of Taravao which forms the connecting link between the larger and smaller peninsulas of Tahiti is so low and narrow that it is not visible from a distance, which makes it easy to imagine that there are two islands instead of one only. The natives call the larger peninsula Opoureoun (Cook) or Tahiti-mu (Great Tahiti) and the smaller Tiarrapu, or Tahiti-iti (Little Tahiti).

Before long we found ourselves close to the isthmus, and commenced to ascend the hills that form the backbone of the island. The road was narrow, and just as we were approaching the top we heard a great noise and shouting, apparently in front of and above us, though nothing could be seen, owing to the abrupt turns in the road. Immediately afterwards two carts full of natives came tearing down as hard as they could go. Fortunately they heard our driver's shouts in time to enable them to put on the breaks, and so to stop at a portion of the road just wide enough to allow us to creep by, though we seemed to overhang the

precipice in doing so. We climbed up and up, till at last, when the horses were nearly exhausted, we reached the summit, and beheld a magnificent prospect on all sides.

A short sharp descent, a long drive over grass roads through a rich forest, and again a brief ascent, brought us to the French fort on the Isthmus of Taravao, whose garrison keep watch over the inhabitants of both portions of the island. A little farther on, we came to our sleeping-quarters for the night, the Hôtel de l'Isthme, situated in a valley in the midst of a dense grove of cocoanuts and bananas, and kept by two retired French sailors, one old and disfigured by wounds, the other young and good-looking, but both active, clean, and obliging. They came out to meet us, and conducted us up a flight of steps on the side of a mud bank to the four rooms forming the hotel. There were two sleeping-apartments, a *salon*, and a *salle-à-manger*, the walls of which consisted of flat pieces of wood, their own width apart, something like Venetian shutters, with unglazed windows and doors opening into the garden. The means of ventilation were thus plentifully provided, but alas, the air was wanting, for not a breath stirred the foliage of the deep valley, and the atmosphere was close and oppressive.

We left our luggage, took our bathing-gowns, or rather gave them to a big native to carry for us, and walked about four hundred yards, along a grassy road,

to the sea, where we paddled about in shallow water and amused ourselves by picking up coral, shells, and *bêche-de-mer*, and watching the blue and yellow fish darting in and out among the rocks, until at last we found a sandy bottom among the coral reefs, which made a capital deep water bath. Dressing again was not such a pleasant affair, owing to the mosquitoes, which settled on our arms and shoulders, and bit us in the most provoking manner, much faster than we could whip them off or put on our clothing. Afterwards we strolled along the shore, which was covered with cocoanuts and drift-wood, washed there, I suppose, from some of the adjacent islands, and on our way back to the hotel we gathered a handful of choice exotics and graceful ferns, with which to decorate the table.

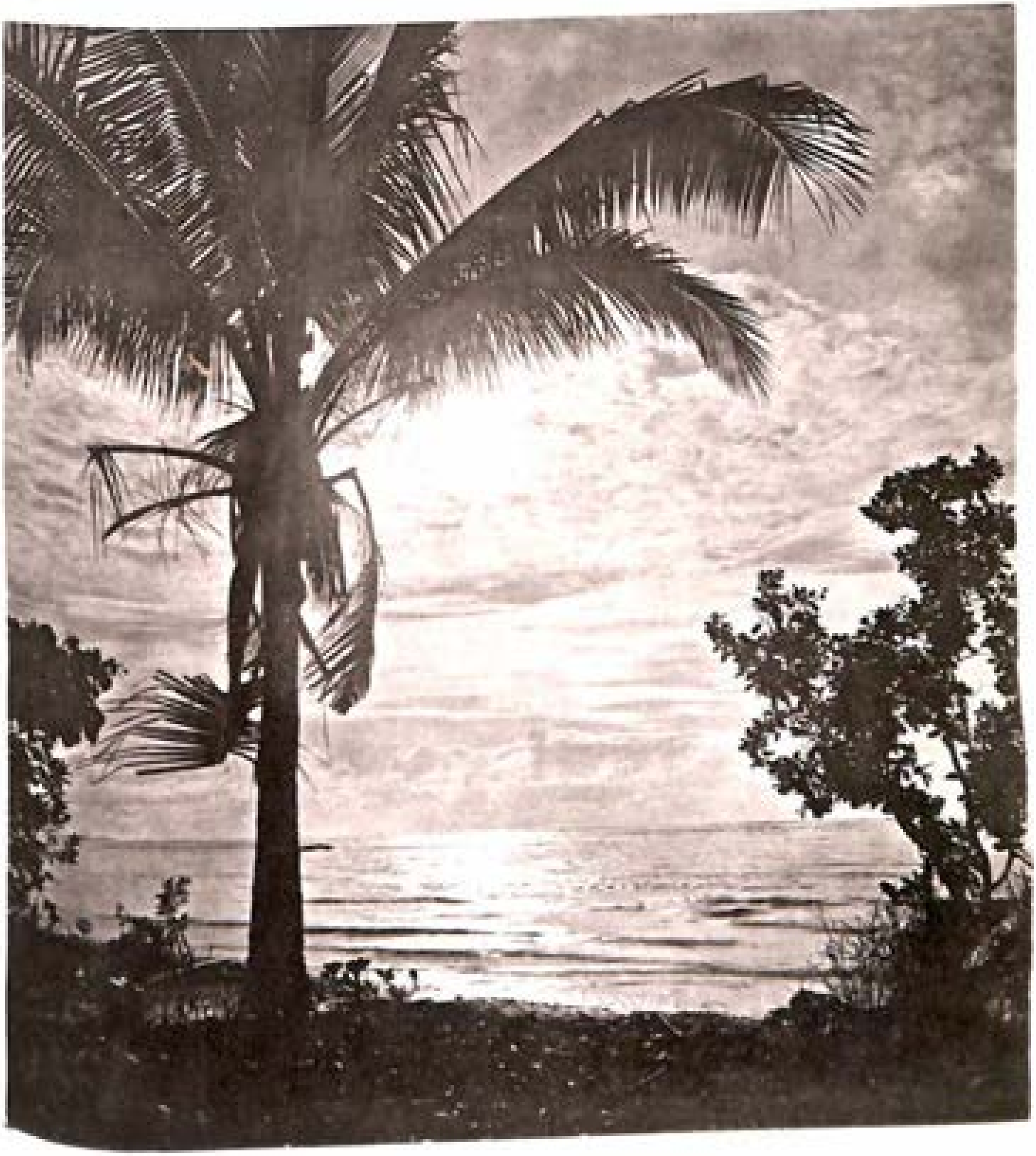
The dinner itself really deserves a detailed description, if only to show that one may make the tour of Tahiti without necessarily having to rough it in the matter of food. We had cray-fish and salad as a preliminary, and excellent soup to commence with, followed by delicious little oysters, that cling to the boughs and roots of the guava and mangrove-trees overhanging the sea. Then came a large fish, name unknown, the inevitable *bouilli* and cabbage, *cotelettes aux pommes*, *bifteck aux champignons*, succeeded by crabs and other shell-fish, including *wurrali*, a delicate-flavoured kind of lobster, an *omelette aux abricots*, and dessert of tropical fruits. We were also supplied with good wine, both red and white, and bottled beer.

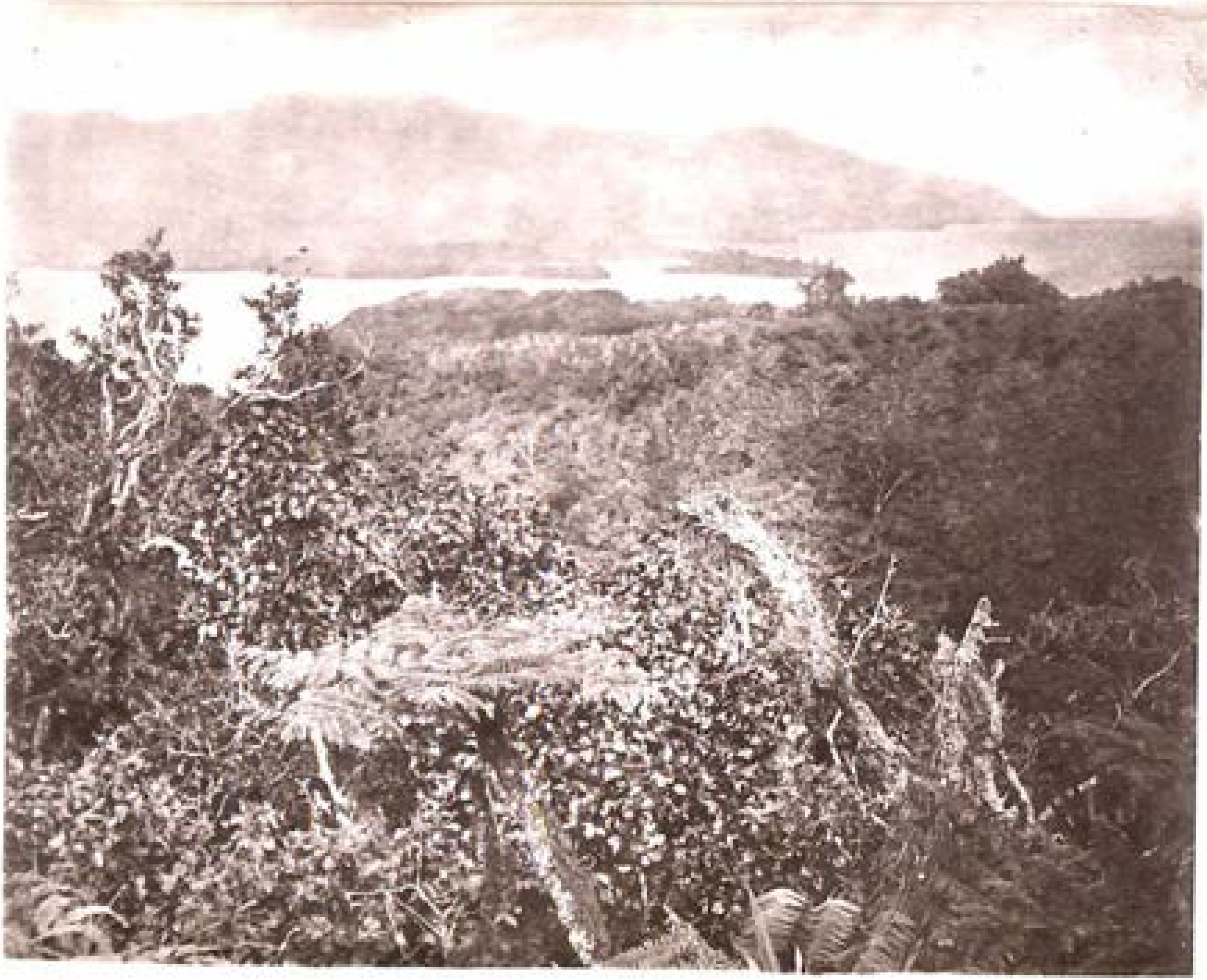
Perhaps I ought to add that the cockroaches were rather lively and plentiful, but they did not form a serious drawback to our enjoyment. After dinner, however, when I went to my room, where it was dark, hundreds of these creatures, about three inches long, and broad in proportion, scuttled away as I lighted the candle; and while we were sitting outside we could see troops of them marching up and down in rows between the crevices of the walls. Then there were the mosquitoes, who hummed and buzzed about us, and with whom, alas, we were doomed to make a closer acquaintance. Our bed was fitted with the very thickest calico mosquito curtains, impervious to the air, but not to the venomous little insects, who found their way in through every tiny opening, in spite of all our efforts to exclude them.

During the night the heat was suffocating, and soon after twelve o'clock we woke up, feeling half stifled. There was a dim light shining into the room, and I thought, "Thank goodness, it's getting daylight;" but on striking my repeater I found to my regret that this was a mistake. In the moonlight I could see columns of nasty brown cockchafers ascending the bed-posts, crawling along the top of the curtains, dropping with a thud on to the bed, and then scuttling down over the side to the ground. At last I could stand it no longer, and opening the curtains cautiously, I seized my slippers, knocked half a dozen brown beasts out of each, wrapped myself in a poncho—previously well

shaken—gathered my garments around me, surmounted a barricade I had constructed over-night to keep the pigs and chickens out of our room, and fled to the garden. All was still, the only sign of life being a light in a neighbouring hut, and I sat out in the open air, in comparative comfort, until driven indoors again by torrents of rain, at about half-past two o'clock.

The morning broke, and the sun rose bright and resplendent. Our sea-bath, inside the coral-reef, shaded by the graceful foliage of a tall cocoanut-tree, and sheltered from the gaze of any possible, though most improbable, passing native, by hibiscus, alamanda, and guava bushes, was indeed a luxury. Among the bushes we found numbers of large hermit-crabs, crawling, or rather running, about in whelk-shells, half a dozen of them occasionally having a grand fight amongst themselves. I should think we picked up twenty different sorts of gracefully shaped pieces of coral. Shells too were abundant, and of an infinite variety of form and colour, including cowries, helmet-shells, the shells from which cameos are sometimes cut, mother-of-pearl shells, and a large spiral univalve, nearly a foot long, with dark brown spots and stripes on a delicate cream-coloured ground, like the skin of a tiger or leopard. On our way back to the inn we examined several of the canoes drawn up on the beach, in which were some fish-spears and a fish-hook, nearly three inches long, made of solid mother-of-pearl, the natural curve of the shell from which it





No. 16. Pine Tree Fern. Tahiti.

was cut being preserved. A piece of bone was securely fastened to it by means of some pig's hair, but there was no bait, and I understand that the glitter of the mother-of-pearl alone serves as a sufficient allurement to the fish.

One of the most noticeable specialities of the Tahiti is the profusion with which tree-ferns abound in all parts of the island. Their slender stems rise to a height of from ten to forty feet, their fronds branching out to a distance of from fifteen to thirty feet, and forming a huge yet delicate green lace umbrella, which even the rays of a tropical sun can scarcely penetrate; fit pavilion of state or bridal canopy for a fairy king or queen.

At half-past seven the horses were put to, and we were just ready for a start, when down came the rain again, more heavily than before. Our host had been extremely anxious that we should stay here for two days, and explore the smaller peninsula thoroughly, which would be a work of time, as there is no good road round it, and you have consequently to go as far as you can along one side, and then return to your starting-place and take a fresh departure. But we had been told that the scenery was very similar to that of the rest of the island, and we had decided, before leaving Papiete, that the journey would hardly be worth the trouble it would involve. As we had talked about it at first, however, our coachman, with whom we could hold but little communication, was

firmly impressed with the idea that he must not let us off until we had done the whole thing. The horses, he assured us, were tired; we should find no change at Paponoa until Wednesday; it was twenty-one leagues (sixty-three miles, instead of twenty-five, as we had been told) to Papiete; we could not possibly get there in one day with the same horses; and, finally, there was no accommodation for eating or sleeping on the road, and we should have to take our chance of passing the night at a chief's house. We did not believe all these statements, and adhered to our determination to start, though I really felt rather sorry for our two landlords, who had evidently expected us to stay longer, and had made preparations accordingly. But they behaved very well under these somewhat trying circumstances, and although our bill, amounting to three dollars a head—which was exceedingly moderate, considering what an out-of-the-way place we were in—had been paid, they filled up the carriage with all the provisions they thought we should be likely to want during our journey, without extra charge.

At last the rain ceased and we started, but at first progressed slowly, owing to the soaked condition of the ground. The road was most wonderful in places, and diversified beyond measure, sometimes running along the white sandy shore, or crossing little gulfs, where the hoofs of the horses and the wheels of the carriage splashed through the shallow blue sea, crushing the lovely white coral and frightening the many

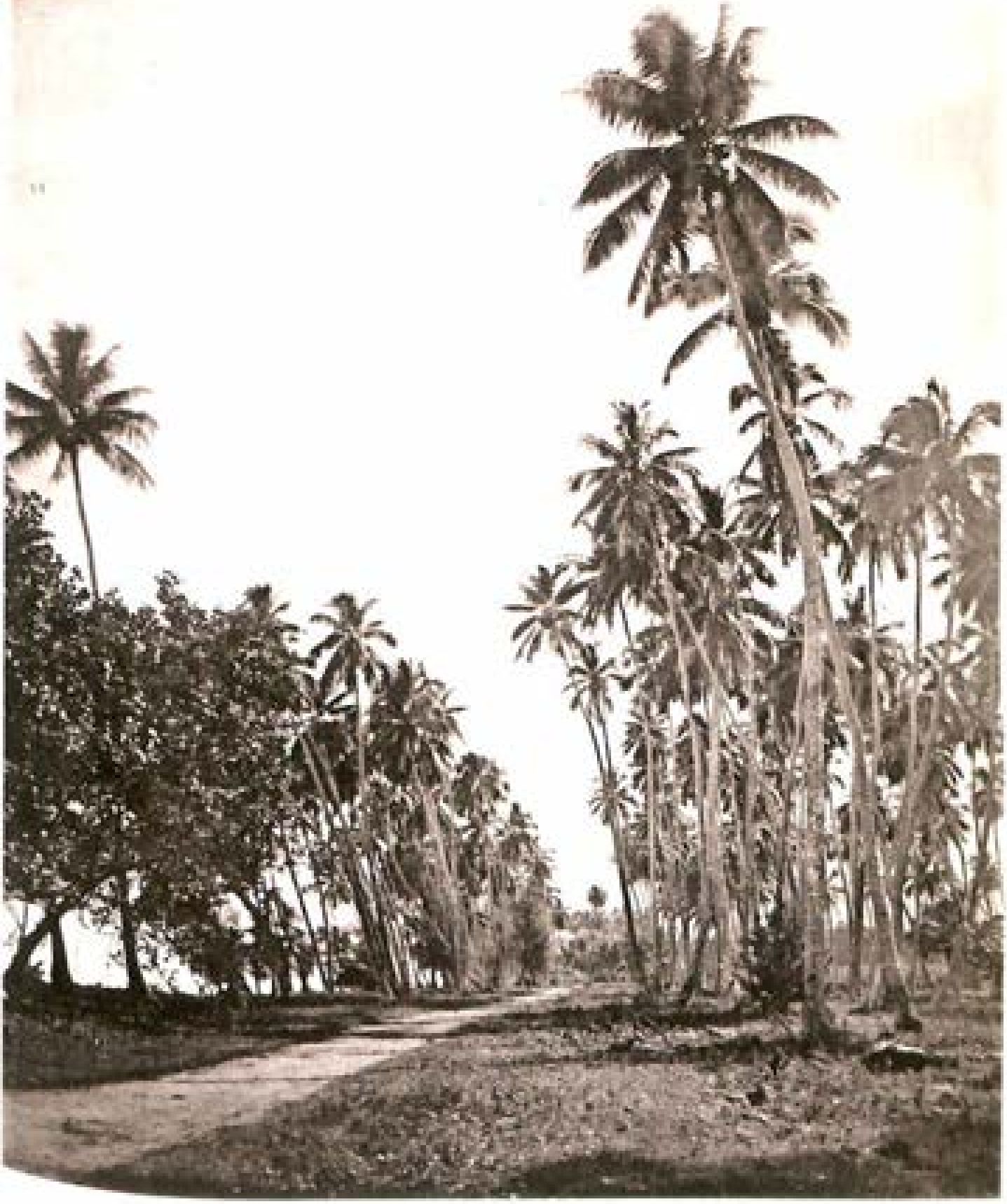
coloured fishes from their hiding-place; sometimes passing over a stony beach or through a dense bush of mangroves, or a forest of cocoanuts and palms, where neither sun nor air seemed ever to penetrate. These forest depths reminded us faintly of the hot-houses at Kew, only that they were ten thousand times more beautiful. Every rare palm and plant, of which one is accustomed at home to see small and puny specimens, were here found growing in the wildest luxuriance, their natural beauty developed to its fullest extent. Stephanotis, passiflora, and laxonias of all kinds climbed to the top of the tallest palms, throwing down, not single stems or tendrils, but a perfect curtain of foliage, interspersed with gorgeous flowers and luscious fruits. Imagine such a scene as this, magnified to an infinite extent, and traversed by a soft grassy mossy road for miles and miles.

Among the trees most frequently met with in Tahiti is the bamboo, the manifold utility of which appears to be as much appreciated here as it is in China and Japan. From its roots, its stem, and its leaves, articles of clothing and house furniture and implements of all kinds are made. The house of which a photograph is given a little further on (with a group of children in front of it) is built and roofed with the stems and leaves of the bamboo. Drinking-cups and other vessels are made from the larger stems divided at the joints; while knives, forks, spoons, and other useful articles are made from the smaller branches. We passed

several groups of natives occupied in scraping the bamboo stems and preparing them for the purposes above mentioned.

After a two hours' drive through the forest we came upon a large shed in which a boat, modelled in the European fashion, was in course of construction, close to a cheerful-looking cottage and garden. We stopped to speak to the man who was at work on the boat, and who told us he was the son of one of the first missionaries sent out to these islands, named Henry. He spoke with considerable bitterness of the French efforts at religious conversion, and of the establishment of the national church, and the incompetency of the native preachers. Occasionally he officiates himself, but only when specially invited to do so, and he evidently thought things would go better if he were allowed a little more latitude in this respect. He pressed us to go in and see his wife and daughters and take some refreshment, and though we should have liked to have done so, we felt that we ought to push on, as the horses were tired, the road was bad, and we were uncertain of the distance we had to go. We promised to take some letters for them to the Sandwich Islands, where Mr. Henry has several sisters, married to other missionaries. A ship seldom sails direct for those Sandwich Islands from here, and as the mail only goes once a month to San Francisco, thence once a month to Honolulu, and thence again once a month to Hilo and other parts of Hawaii, the delivery

No. 17. Women, young girls, and boys scraping bamboo, for house-building, basket-making, furniture, &c.



of letters is always a lengthy and generally a very uncertain matter.

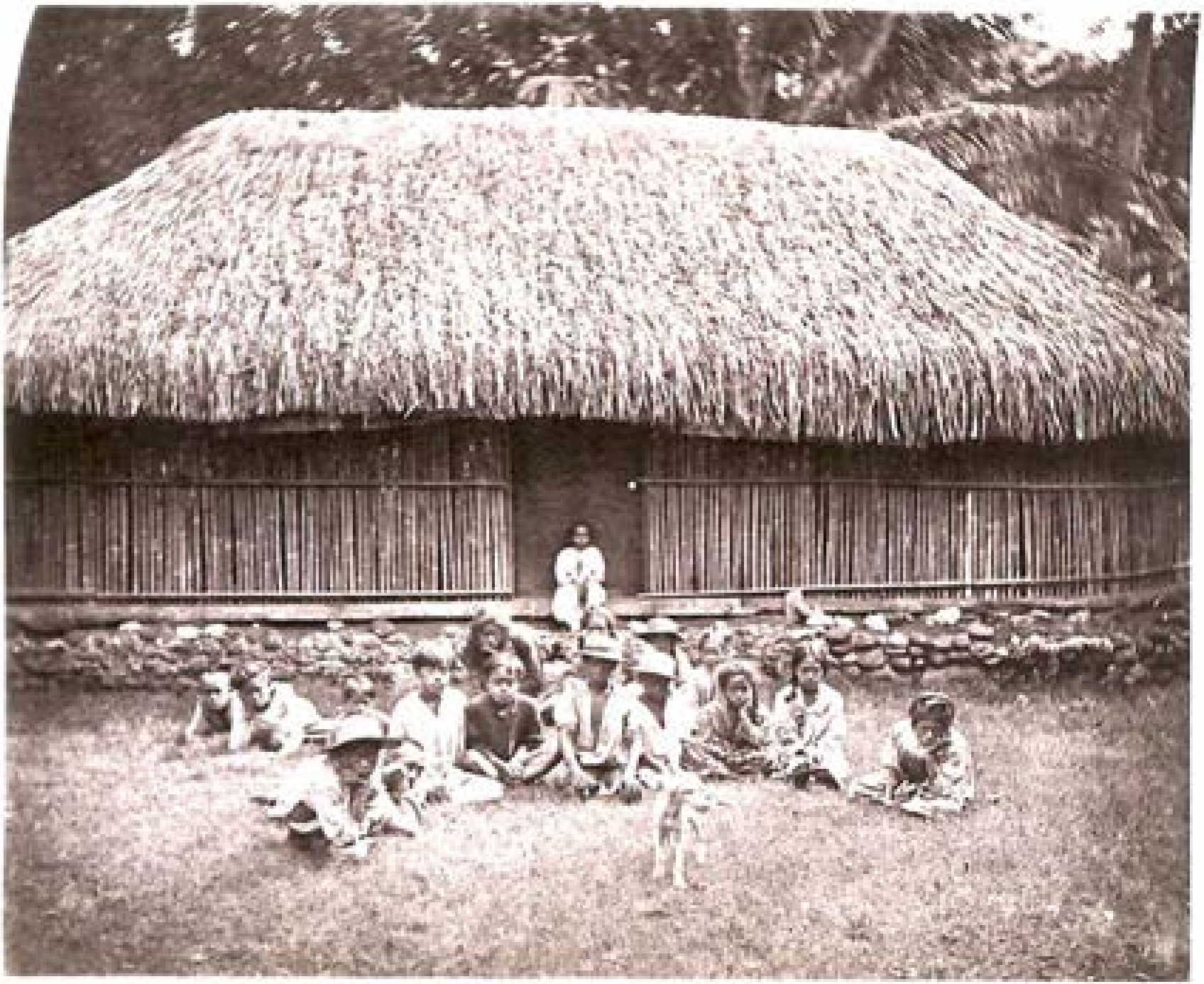
After parting from the boat-builder the road or track got worse and worse. Many rivers we crossed, and many we stuck in, the gentlemen having more than once to take off their shoes and stockings, tuck up their trousers, jump into the water, and literally put their shoulders to the wheel. Sometimes we drove out into the shallow sea, till it seemed doubtful when and where we should make the land again. Sometimes we climbed up a solid road, blasted out of the face of the black cliffs, or went along the shore of the tranquil lagoon, frightening the land-crabs into their holes as they felt the shake of the approaching carriage.

> Calm and careless heaved the wave below,
> Eternal with unsympathetic flow,
> Far o'er its face the dolphins sported on;
> And sprung the flying fish against the sun
> Till its dried wing relapsed from its brief height
> To gather moisture for another flight.

At Mahaena we alighted and entered the house of a chief, which appeared to be the abode of many families. It was about eighty feet long by fifty broad, built of straight bamboos laced together with cocoanut sinnet, like most of the native dwellings. The roof was supported on long poles, converging to a centre rafter, and the base of each was covered with the finest plaited matting, with patterns stained upon it,

which produced the effect of carved wood-work. One end of the floor, which was strewn with dried grass, was covered with baskets of fruit, ready packed for sale, and piles of passion-fruit, oranges, cocoanuts, and fresh vegetables. A canoe full of cocoanut oil, and two or three other canoes, highly decorated, were also at this end of the building. In the centre groups of natives were squatted about on the floor, some making baskets, some plaiting hats and wreaths, and others making what looked like creamy-white feather plumes, somewhat similar to those worn by officers in their cocked hats, only softer and more graceful. This is called *reva-reva*, and is made from the inner pith of the young centre shoots of the cocoanut-tree; and as its manufacture involves the destruction of the trees from which the material is procured it is rather expensive. It is, as a rule, only worn by the chiefs at great feasts, as a trimming to their cloaks, though a small tuft is sometimes used by other people as a decoration for their hats. At the other extremity of the building, behind a very transparent open-work screen, there were about twenty large ordinary-looking four-post bedsteads, which looked altogether sadly out of place, and which appeared to have been just put down anyhow, according to the whim of their owners, without the slightest attempt at order or method in their arrangement.

Troops of natives kept pouring into the shed, and we learnt from the chief—a fine-looking man, who



could speak a little French—that the annual visit of the tax-gatherer was hourly expected, and that all the inhabitants of the district were coming to meet him, in order to pay their head-money. This was rather a fortunate circumstance for us, as we saw many more people than we should otherwise have done, all dressed moreover, in their best. The chief himself, in bidding us farewell, expressed his intention of coming to pay his respects to us at Papiete, and to beg our acceptance of some pineapples, cocoanuts, and a pig.

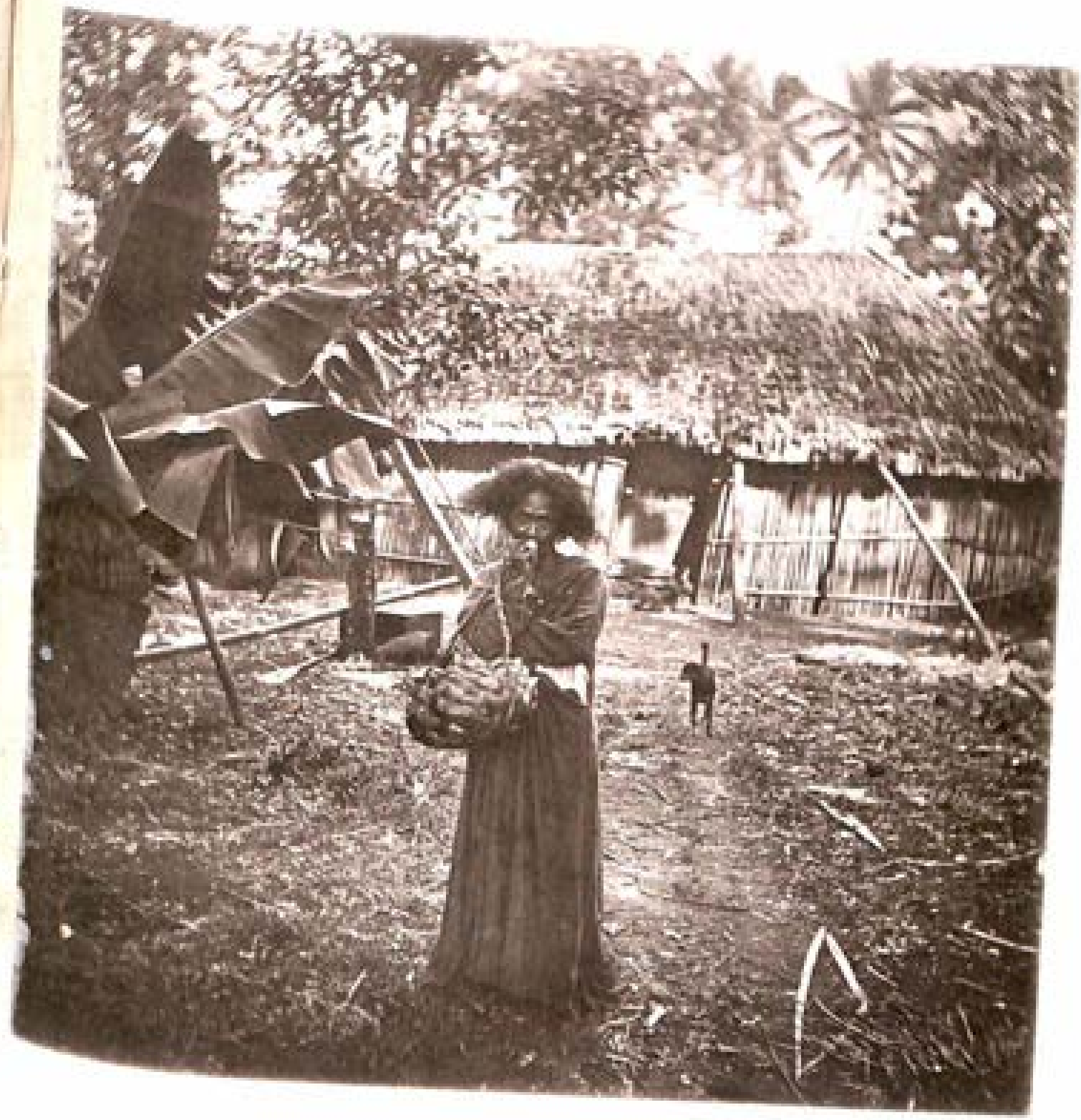
At the first river we came to, we met a gentleman on horseback, who looked like a French missionary; and at the next we passed the tax-gatherer, a fat, comfortable-looking Frenchman, decorated with the Legion of Honour. He was in a light American waggon, with his strong-boxes at his feet, a money-bag strapped across his capacious chest, and another man riding behind him, to act, I suppose, as *renfort* in case of need.

At every village where we stopped, the chief or headman would tell one or other of the bystanders to fetch down some cocoanuts from the trees close by, and after cutting off the ends would offer us a drink of the fresh cool milk, which was all the sweeter and better for the fact that the nuts were not nearly ripe. In order to procure the nuts the boy or man tied a withy of banana leaves round his feet, and proceeded to climb, or rather hop, up the nearest tree, raising

himself with his two hands and his two feet alternately, with an exactly similar action to that of our old friend the monkey on the stick. Those who have only tasted the cocoanut in England can have no idea what a delicious fruit it really is when nearly ripe and freshly plucked. The natives dexterously remove the outer husk, just leaving a little piece to serve as a foot for the pale brown cup to rest on. They then smooth off the top, and you have an elegant vase, something like a mounted ostrich egg in appearance, lined with the snowiest ivory, and containing about three pints of cool sweet water. Why it is called milk I never can understand, for it is as clear as crystal, and is always cool and refreshing, though the nut in which it is contained has generally been exposed to the fiercest sun. In many of the coral islands, where the water is brackish, the natives drink scarcely anything but cocoanut milk; and even here, if you are thirsty and ask for water, you are almost always presented with a cocoanut full of its own fresh milk instead. While this was going on other natives would bring us more cocoanuts and fish and fowls, laying them at our feet as a present. The fish were of endless variety. Some were of a dark brown colour like bream, others were long and thin, with a pipe-like nose and four fins, somewhat resembling the wings of a flying fish.

Many of the villages we passed through contained wonderfully pretty little houses, surrounded by lovely gardens, full of flowers, and fruits of all sorts, and

No. 25. Plantain. A boy climbs a tree to fetch me a cocoa-nut.



each had its church, its school, and its chief's house. Crowds of children were playing about on the grass, or paddling and swimming in the little streams and creeks; for except in a few places, the road really runs round the outside of the island, very close to the edge of the sea, if not exactly on its borders. At one place we were taken to see a witch or prophetess, who, as far as we could judge, was only a wild-looking, but not in other respects very remarkable woman, inhabiting a large and apparently comfortable hut, and living alone except for the companionship of her three cats, her dog, and her little pig, the latter being tied up to a dog kennel in a corner.

Pigs are great pets here; and in Papiete it is by no means uncommon to meet ladies walking along with their little favourites carefully brushed and combed, with dainty blue or red rosettes and bows on their necks and tails, and led by a long ribbon like the pug dogs in some of the old Dutch pictures. Indeed these South Sea Island pigs somewhat resemble pugs in their size, gait, and colour, notwithstanding the difference in the length of their nose. Their tameness and docility are marvellous. I had one for some time on board the yacht, after we left Tahiti. He was only about ten inches long, but looked at least a hundred years old, and was altogether the most quaint old-fashioned little object imaginable. He took a great fancy to the dogs, and trotted about after me with them everywhere on the tips of his little toes—even up

and down the steep cabin stairs. We called him Agag, because he walked so delicately.

In nearly all accounts of voyages in the South Seas, much space is devoted to the description of the purchase, or rather barter, of hogs. Their flesh is excellent, fully confirming Captain Cook's statement as to the superiority of South Sea Island pork to any other; which is doubtless due to the fact that the pigs are fed entirely on cocoanuts and bread-fruit. Still it seems a pity to eat such tame little creatures as some of the pigs are; for it is not only as pets that they are esteemed by the islanders. We saw one as we passed through a village that had already been prepared for cooking in the native fashion, that is to say surrounded by bananas and lying in a hole in the ground ready to be covered up for roasting; and very excellent is the result of this culinary arrangement. There is no mutton, except in a preserved state, to be had at Tahiti, and beef is only to be procured occasionally when cattle arive from New Zealand or Australia, so that it is perhaps just as well that the pigs are good.

We were now approaching the end of our journey. Having been met by fresh horses, sent out from Paponoa, it was not long before we found ourselves at Point Venus, where Cook's tamarind-tree was pointed out to us in the distance. Here we got on to a good piece of road, down which we rattled rapidly to the plains outside Papiete.

On the morning after our return from our expedition, Messrs. Brander's mail-ship, a sailing-vessel of about 600 tons, sailed for San Francisco, and we took the opportunity of sending by her our letters for England.

The passage to the United States occupies twenty-five days on an average, and is performed with great regularity once a month each way. The vessels employed on this line, three in number, are well built, and have good accommodation for passengers, and they generally carry a full cargo. In the present instance the latter consisted of a peculiar kind of fungus, and tripang (*bêche-de-mer*) for China, oranges for San Francisco, a good many packages of sundries, and a large parcel of pearls, entrusted to the captain at the last moment. So brisk is the trade carried on between Tahiti and the United States, that the cost of this vessel was more than covered by the freights the first year after she was built. In addition to these ships, there are those which run backwards and forwards to Valparaiso, and also the little island trading-schooners; so that the Tahitians can boast of quite a respectable fleet of vessels, not imposing perhaps in point of tonnage, but as smart and serviceable-looking as could be desired. The trading-schooners are really beautiful little craft, and I am sure that, well-kept and properly manned, they would show to no discredit among our yachts at Cowes. Not a day passes without one or more entering or leaving the harbour, returning from or bound to the lonely isles with which the south-west

No. 95. Various masks, pr[illegible]s, &c.

portion of the Pacific is studded. They are provided with a patent log, but their captains, who are intelligent men, do not care much about a chronometer, as the distances to be run are comparatively short and are easily judged.

We heard rather an amusing account of the manner in which negotiations with the natives are conducted. The more civilized islanders have got beyond barter, and prefer hard cash, in American dollars, for their pearls, shells, cocoanuts, sandal-wood, &c. Having received the money, they remain on deck for some time, discussing their bargains amongst themselves. Then they peep down through the open skylights into the cabin below, where the most attractive prints and the gaudiest articles of apparel are temptingly displayed, alongside a few bottles of rum and brandy, and a supply of tobacco. Before long the bait is taken; down go the poor natives, the goods are sold, and the dollars have once more found their way into the captain's hands.

I had a long talk with one of the men who had arrived from Flint Island—a picturesque-looking individual, in a bright red flannel shirt and an orange coloured neckcloth, with a straw hat jauntily surmounting a good-looking brown face and a mass of black, shiny, curly hair. Flint Island is a place whose existence has been disputed, it having been more than once searched for by ships in vain. It was therefore particularly interesting to meet some one who had

actually visited, and had just returned from, the spot in question. That islands do occasionally disappear entirely in these parts there can be little doubt. The schooners of this spot were formerly in the habit of trading with a small island close to Rarotonga, whose name I forget; but about four years ago, when proceeding there with the usual three-monthly cargo of provisions, prints, &c., they failed to find the island, of which no trace has since been seen. Two missionaries from Rarotonga are believed to have been on it at the time of its disappearance, and they seem to have shared its mysterious fate.

While at Papiete, I had also an interesting conversation with a man named Flockton, who had done a great deal of surveying work in the adjacent islands. He told me that when he first landed at Flint Island, which is one of the richest guano islands in the neighbourhood, he was unable to find any trace of previous human habitation, but that, after removing a deposit of fifteen feet of guano, he had himself discovered two stone axes. One he broke with the same stroke of the pickaxe that brought it to light, the other he gave to a friend. I tried very hard to trace it and gain possession of it, but could not succeed. At Voslok, another guano island, there have also been discovered some very curious remains.

He had also succeeded in collecting a number of gods or idols, paddles, masks, and other curiosities, which I tried hard to persuade him to part with; but

they were all promised to Mr. Godefroi for his museum. I succeeded, however, in inducing him to take them to be photographed, together with a very curious Easter Island stone inscription, and some gods from the same place. The former will, I hope, some day be the means of throwing a light, not only on the manner in which this archipelago originally became peopled—whether from the south-west or from the north-east—but also on the meaning of some of the Himyaritic and Chaldean inscriptions, the interpretation of which has hitherto baffled the efforts of antiquaries. What is so curious is, that the same gods and the same hitherto untranslated inscriptions are found both in Easter Island, which is at the extreme south-west, and in the Ladrones, which are at the extreme north-east corner of this archipelago, while in most, or at all events in many, of the intermediate and more central islands there is a total absence of such interesting relics and remains.

A good many curiosities were brought on board for our inspection during our stay at Tahiti. Among them were two handsome cloaks, of the kind worn by chiefs at feasts. They were of tapa cloth, beautifully woven, and dyed a bright yellow, trimmed with fringe and ornamented with knots of the graceful reva-reva. Sixty dollars were asked for them, but I was told this was too dear, and bid thirty, an offer which was declined at the time, but subsequently accepted.

One day a gentleman came and asked me if I should like to see some remarkably fine pearls, and on my

expressing my wish to do so, he took me to his house, where I was introduced to his wife, whom I recognized as having been on board the yacht previously. They were worth going to look at, but were too expensive for me, one pear-shaped pearl alone having been valued at 1000*l.* The lady told me they came from an island belonging to her, and presented me with two shells containing pearls in various stages of formation, promising at the same time to send some more curiosities, of which they have an interesting collection, to me on board the yacht. Altogether, it was rather a strange visit on my part, for I had not the least idea who my new friends were, or even what was their name, and they must have been almost as ignorant about me.

While at Papiete we paid a visit to Messrs. Brander's stores, where all sorts of requisites for fitting out ships and their crews can be procured. It rather surprised me to find how plentiful were the supplies of the necessaries, and even the luxuries of civilized life, in this far-away corner of the globe. You can even get *ice* here, for the manufacture of which a retired English infantry officer has set up an establishment—I believe with great success. But what interested me most were the products of this and the neighbouring islands. There were tons of exquisitely tinted pearl shells, six or eight inches in diameter, formerly a valuable article of commerce, but now worth comparatively little. The pearls that came out of them had unfortunately been sent away to Liverpool—1000*l.* worth by the last,

and 5000*l.* by the previous mail-ship. Then there was vanilla, a most precarious crop, that must be carefully watered and shaded from the first moment that it is planted, and that has to be gathered before it is ripe, and dried and matured in a moist heat, between blankets and feather beds, in order that the pods may not crack and allow the essence to escape; edible fungus, exported to San Francisco, and thence to Hong Kong, solely for the use of the Chinese; tripang, which, either living or dead, fresh or dried, looks equally untempting, but which is highly esteemed by the Celestials; coprah, or dried cocoanut kernels, broken into small pieces in order that they may stow better, and exported to England and other parts, where the oil is expressed and oil-cake is formed; and various other articles of commerce. The trade of the island is fast increasing, the average annual value of the exports for each period of five years between 1845 and 1874 having risen from 8400*l.* to 98,000*l.* exclusive of the value of the pearls, which would increase it by at least another 3000*l.* or 4000*l.*

I speak from personal experience when I say that every necessary for life on board ship, and many luxuries, can be procured at Tahiti. American canned fruits and vegetables are far better than those procured from England. Preserved milk is uncertain—sometimes better, sometimes worse, than what one gets at home. Tinned salmon is much better. Australian mutton, New Zealand beef, and South Sea pork, leave

No. 26. Going to a Picnic: our Servants with provisions.

nothing to be desired in the way of preserved meat. Fresh beef, mutton, and butter are hardly procurable, and the latter, when preserved, is uneatable.

The day before sailing from Tahiti we had arranged to go to the coral reef with the children, to have a picnic there, and had accordingly given the servants leave to go ashore for the evening; but it began to rain heavily just as we were on the point of starting, and we had to remain on board the yacht. You see therefore that there are occasionally drawbacks to perfect enjoyment, even in this lovely climate, when—

> The hooded clouds, like friars,
> Tell their beads in drops of rain.

A picnic in the South Sea islands, it may here be remarked, is quite a different affair to a picnic at home, at any rate as far as the materials for the feast are concerned, and also in regard to mode of carrying them, as will be seen from the accompanying photograph.

One of the most exquisite of the many lovely objects that attract the eye in the lovely harbour of Papiete is the island of Eimeo, especially at sunset, when daylight dies and the crimson sun sinks behind masses of cloud—

> Not with lingering sweep,
> As in the the north he mellows o'er the deep;
> But fiery, full and fierce, as if he left
> The world for ever, earth of life bereft.

Findlay, in his "South Pacific Directory," thus describes the island :—

"Moorea, or Eimeo, was discovered by Captain Wallis, July 27th, 1767, and by him named Duke of York Island. The distance between the reefs of Tahiti and that of Eimeo, as measured by the United States Exploring Expedition Ship *Vincennes*, with the patent log, was ten miles. Eimeo is a beautiful object in the view from Tahiti, and its beauty is enhanced on a nearer approach; its hills and mountains may, without any great stretch of imagination, be converted into battlements, spires, and towers, rising one above the other, their grey sides clothed here and there with verdure, which, at a distance, resembles ivy of the richest hue. Eimeo has, if possible, a more broken surface than Tahiti, and is more thrown up into separate peaks; its scenery is wild, even in comparison with Tahiti, and particularly upon the shores, where the mountains rise precipitously from the water, to the height of 2500 feet. The reef which surrounds the island is similar to that of Tahiti, and has no soundings immediately outside of it. Black cellular lava abounds, and holes are found in its sheltered ridges, among which is the noted one through which the god Oroo is said to have thrown his spear. The inhabitants of Eimeo reside upon the shores, where there are several large villages on the southern side of the island. Coffee, small cotton, sugar, and all other tropical plants succeed well at Eimeo, and sugar is made to a considerable extent."

It is said to be the finest island of the Georgian

group, and we all regretted that we were unable to spare the time to visit it. From afar it reminds one of the Dolomite Mountains, in the Tyrol, and it is said that the resemblance is even more striking on a near approach. The harbour is a long narrow gorge, between high mountains, clothed with palms, oranges, and plantains, and is one of the most remarkable features of the place.

As the time fixed for our departure from Tahiti drew nearer and nearer, so did our regret at having to leave these fairy-like scenes increase. One feels in this delightful climate, where all is so bright and joyful, and where most visitors from afar are but such fleeting guests, the wisdom of the poet's advice:—

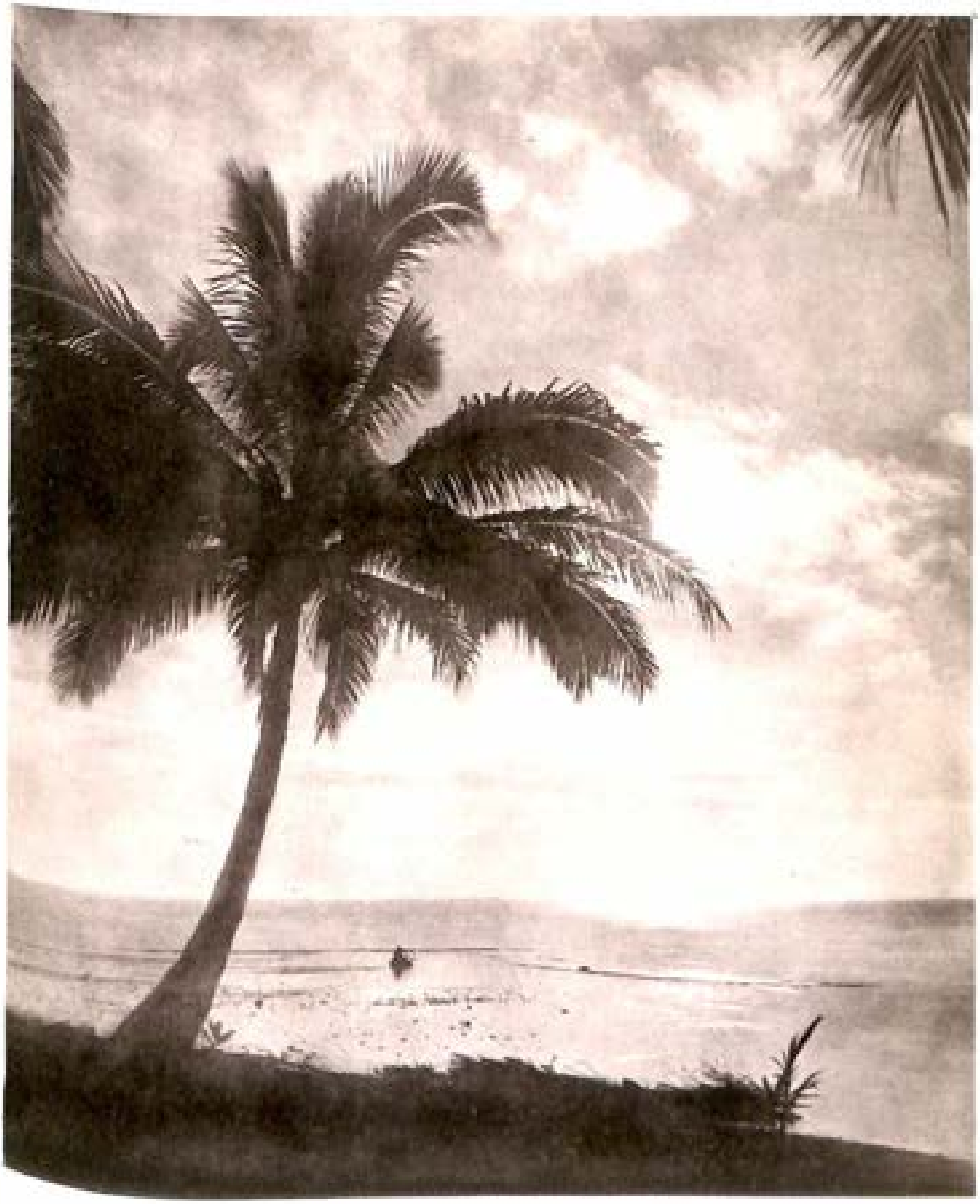
> Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
> Old time is still a flying;
> And then some flower that smiles to day
> To-morrow will be dying.

If day had its charms, they were equalled, if not eclipsed, by those of the night. Each evening seemed to be more beautiful than its predecessor. On the last night of our stay at Papiete the moon was so brilliant that we could enjoy sitting on deck reading, and even doing some coarse needlework, without any other light. There was an extraordinary luminous appearance in the sea, consisting of large isolated globes of light, of about the size and brilliancy of moderator lamps. I suppose the strange sight must have been due to the presence of some large kind of jelly-fish. We

might have imagined it to be an illumination prepared in our honour as a kind of farewell compliment. Presently a splendid meteor appeared. It was of a light orange colour, with a fiery tail about two degrees in extent, and described in its course an arc of about sixty degrees, from S.S.E. to N.N.W., before it disappeared into space, far above the horizon. If the night had been darker the spectacle would have been finer; but as it was, the moon seemed quite paled for a few minutes afterwards. We had seen many meteors, falling-stars, and shooting-stars, since we entered on this vast ocean, but none so fine as this.

On the reef the fishermen were assembled in large numbers, their finely made, almost naked figures, looking like splendid bronze statues from the antique, in the ruddy torchlight's glare.

The day of our departure at last arrived. In the morning, just as the sun was rising, we went off again to the coral reef, to enjoy its beauties for the last time. We proceeded past Quarantine Island to the portion of the reef on the other side of the harbour, where we had not yet been, and where I think the coral plants, and flowers, and bushes, showed to greater advantage than ever, as they were less crowded, and the occasional patches of sandy bottom enabled one to see them better. We were so engrossed in our examination of these marvels of the deep, and of the fish with which the water abounded, that we found ourselves aground several times.



It is on the low shore adjoining the reef that the cocoanut-tree displays its fullest vigour, flourishing on the most barren and unsheltered sea-beach, amid fragments of coral reef and sand, its roots washed by every advancing tide. The various parts of the tree are applied by the inhabitants of Polynesia to the same varied and useful purposes as those to which they are devoted in other parts of the world. "Year after year the islander reposes beneath its shade, both eating and drinking of its fruit; he thatches his hut with its boughs, and weaves them into baskets to carry his food; he cools himself with a fan plaited from the young leaflets, and shields his head from the sun by a bonnet of the leaves. Sometimes he clothes himself with the cloth-like substance which wraps round the base of the stalks, whose elastic rods, strung with filberts, are used as a taper; the larger nuts, thinned and polished furnish him with a beautiful goblet, the smaller ones with bowls for his pipes: the dry husks kindle his fires; their fibres are twisted into fishing-lines and cords for his canoes; he heals his wounds with a balsam compounded from the juice of the nut; and with the oil extracted from its meat anoints his own limbs and embalms the bodies of the dead. The noble trunk itself is far from being valueless. Sawn into posts it upholds the islander's dwelling; converted into charcoal it cooks his food, and, supported on blocks of stone, rails in his lands. He impels his canoe through the water with a paddle of the wood, and goes to battle with clubs and spears of the same material."

Later in the morning we landed, and drove along the same road by which we had returned from our excursion round the island, and over the steep hill, to Point Venus and the lighthouse, a plain white building, erected in the time of Pomare III. The door was locked, and the keepers were away, but I believe there was nothing special to see inside. Afterwards we went to see Captain Cook's tamarind-tree, which, there can be no doubt, was planted with his own hand. It had many seeds, of which we collected a few to bring home to England. They have since been sown, and the plants are doing well. The original tree is now carefully railed in and preserved.

Thence we drove quickly to Mahaena, where there is a well-built house, pleasantly situated close to the sea-shore, and surrounded on three sides by a plantation of twenty thousand cocoanut-trees. Each tree is worth from a dollar to a dollar and a half a year, so that the plantation must be a valuable property. Besides the cocoanuts there is cotton and vanilla, the latter of which is one of the prettiest creepers I ever saw, and some good English stock of various kinds—horses, cattle, sheep, and pigs.

We had arranged not to sail until the evening, so as to be able to take part in a native feast that had been kindly arranged in our honour. Accordingly, after seeing as much of Mahaena and its beauties as our limited time would allow, we re-entered the carriages and drove over to Fuatahua, where we found the chil-

dren and maids had arrived just before us. The grand piano, every table, and the drawing-room floor, were spread with the presents we were expected to take away with us. It really made one feel quite embarrassed to accept so many beautiful and valuable things, which we shall indeed prize as remembrances of our visit to Tahiti, when we get them safely to England. Many of them it would be utterly impossible to buy at any price. There were bunches of scarlet feathers, two or three hundred in number, from the tail of the tropic bird, which are only allowed to be possessed and worn by chiefs, and which must be of great value, as each bird only produces two feathers; pearl shells, with rare corals growing on them, red coral from the islands on the equator, curious sponges and sea-weed, *tapa* cloth and *reva-reva* fringe, arrowroot and palm-leaf hats, cocoanut drinking-vessels, fine mats plaited in many patterns, and other specimens of the products of the island.

All the members of the royal family at present in Tahiti had been invited to meet us, and arrived in due course, including the heir-apparent and his brother and his sister, and Mrs. Salmon and her daughter, from Eimeo. Mr. Salmon, who had driven over from the other side of the island, was formerly at school at Hastings, for five years. He knew us perfectly well by sight, and remembered with interest my husband's first election. He kindly invited us to go and stay with him, promising some really good fishing, and

the opportunity of seeing many native sports would have been very interesting; but it was of course impossible for us to accept. All the other guests were dressed in the native costume, with wreaths on their heads and necks, and even the servants—including our own, whom I hardly recognized—were similarly decorated. Wreaths had also been prepared for us, three of fragrant yellow flowers for Mabelle, Muriel, and myself, and others of a different kind for the gentlemen.

When the feast was ready, the Prince offered me his arm, and we all walked in a procession to a grove of bananas in the garden, where our hostess met us, surrounded by her servants of all classes, male and female. They formed two lines for us to pass between, and at a given signal saluted us with three hearty English cheers. After this we continued our walk till we arrived at a house, built in the native style, by the side of a rocky stream like a Scotch burn. The uprights of the house were banana-trees, transplanted with their leaves on, so as to shade the roof, which was formed of plaited cocoanut-palm leaves, each about fifteen feet long, laid transversely across bamboo rafters. From these light-green supports and the dark-green roof depended the yellow and brown leaves of the *theve*, woven into graceful garlands and elegant festoons. The floor was covered with the finest mats, with black and white borders, the centre being strewn with broad green plantain leaves, to form the

table-cloth, on which were laid baskets and dishes, made of leaves sewn together, and containing all sorts of native delicacies. There were oysters, lobsters, wurrali, and crawfish, stewed chicken, sucking-pig (baked by means of hot stones, in the manner already described), plantains, bread-fruit, melons, bananas, oranges, and strawberries. Before each guest were placed a half cocoanut full of salt water, another full of chopped cocoanut, a third full of fresh water, and another full of milk, two pieces of bamboo, a basket of *poi*, half a bread-fruit, and a platter of green leaves, the latter being changed with each course. We took our seats on the ground round the green table. Mrs. Brander's uncle delivered an address in the native language, which Mr. Salmon translated for our benefit, grace was said, and we commenced. The first operation was to mix the salt water and the chopped cocoanut together, so as to make an appetizing sauce, into which we were supposed to dip each morsel we ate, the empty salt-water bowl being then filled up with fresh water, with which to wash our fingers and lips. We were all wonderfully successful in the use of our fingers as substitutes for knives and forks, though we could not manage the performance quite so gracefully as those more accustomed to it. Altogether I think I never enjoyed a meal so much in my life, and I felt quite disappointed when, toward the end of it, a truffled turkey, and knives and forks and plates, made their appearance, our kind hostess, in the plenitude of her

hospitality, fearing that we might not have been able to make a satisfactory repast on the food already provided. The only drawback, as far as the dinner itself was concerned, was that it was eaten amid such a scene of novelty and beauty, that our attention was continually distracted; there was so much to admire around one, both in the house itself, and outside, where we could see the mountain stream, the groves of palms and bread-fruit, and beyond them the bright sea and the surf-beaten coral reef. After we had finished, all the servants sat down to dinner, and from a dais at one end of the room we surveyed the bright and animated scene, the gentlemen—and some of the ladies too—meanwhile enjoying their cigarettes.

The photograph gives some idea, though a faint one, of the luxuriance of the foliage by which we were surrounded. On the right, facing the picture, is a specimen of the *artocarpus incisa*, or bread-fruit-tree, with its bright dark-green glossy, deeply-indented, leaves, something like a gigantic and extra-beautiful fig-tree, bearing great round fruit as big as a child's head. This fruit is a staple article of food in the island, as in many other places. The natives use the viscid milky juice, which contains caoutchouc, to caulk their canoes, and also as birdlime. The wood is something like mahogany, while from the inner bark is made a sort of paper-like tappa and coarse cloth. The jack-fruit-tree, or *artocarpus integrifolia*, bears fruit, sometimes weighing four or five pounds, in the

No. 20. A bit of Tropical Vegetation

most curious manner, growing all up the main stem, with scarcely any stalk. In the foreground are the great leaves of the taro, from which the national dish, poi, is made, by pounding the roots, and allowing them to partially ferment. Many of the natives live almost entirely on poi, and no meal or royal feast is complete without it. It is not agreeable as a rule to European tastes, especially to begin dinner with. Its consistency is about that of treacle, and it is called "two" or "three-fingered poi," according to the strength of the mixture. The flavour is something like that of paste gone bad. The custom here is for each person present at a meal to put two or three fingers, as the case may be, into his own poi bowl, and then present them to his neighbour, who opens his mouth to receive them, and then proceeds to return the compliment, which it is considered a terrible insult to refuse. Having performed this little ceremony with your neighbours on either side, you are then at liberty to proceed with your meal, carefully washing your fingers between each mouthful. Everything is spotlessly clean and well served; but we used to find it rather trying *sometimes* to comply with the hospitable wishes of our friends, by eating as much as was offered us of the strange delicacies provided for our entertainment, especially as they were unaccompanied by bread, wine, or salt. Their places were supplied, or were supposed to be supplied, by bread-fruit, which I never learnt to like, cocoanut-milk, and the sea water, with little bits of chopped-up cocoanut,

or sea weed, floating about in it, into which, as I have already mentioned, you were supposed to dip each morsel of food before eating it.

When we got back to Papiete, late in the afternoon, there were so many things to be done in the way of preparation that it seemed impossible that we could start the same evening. At six o'clock the pilot sent word that it was no longer safe to go out of the harbour on account of the fast ebbing tide; but steam was already up, and it was therefore determined that we should go outside the reef and wait there for the rest of our party, some of whom were still on shore. At last they arrived, the anchor was raised, and we began to steam ahead, taking one long last look at Papiete and our kind friends waving regretful farewells on the shore, as we slowly emerged from the harbour, and they faded from our view.

THE END.

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